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(Letters and MSS. for the Editor, and Books for review, should be addressed to 10, Adelphi Terrace, W.C.2.)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE analysis compiled by the *Publishers' Circular* of books issued during 1920 in the United Kingdom has some points of interest. The total number of books published is 11,004, an increase of 2,382 over the total for 1919. A large part of this increase (887) comes under the heading "Fiction," a fact which, the *Circular* comments, "may be viewed with apprehension by some." Regarded as an indication that more paper, binding, labour and time are spent on comparative rubbish, the apprehension is justified. Religion, it appears, has suffered an "unaccountable relapse" (—87), and, indeed, its position in 1914, when it stood next to Fiction, is now occupied by Sociology. This fact probably has some significance. That Religion should have sunk from the second to the fifth place, and Sociology risen from the fourth to the second, probably does indicate a change in the interests of the community. We could, vaguely, have anticipated some such redistribution as an effect of the war. But there are other items which baffle us.

Why, for instance, has "Juvenile" risen from the seventh to the third place? Is it an indication of increased intelligence on the part of youth, or merely of increased purchasing power? Science, we see, has fallen three places, while Literature is at the very bottom of the list. On the other hand, Technology has advanced a step. If a deduction may be permitted, it would seem that while the more purely creative activities of the mind are receiving less attention, greater heed is being paid to the larger practical aspects of life. This seems plausible, for it is what one would expect. Modern practical problems, of the kind that may be listed under Sociology and Technology, are so

insistent that they compel attention, even if it be a reluctant attention. On the other hand, all forms of "idealism" have suffered a set-back from the war, and this may explain, amongst other things, the decline in Religion.

* * * *

Rather surprisingly, there are signs that Paris is beginning to be a little doubtful of its own self-sufficiency in drama. M. Adolphe Brisson, usually the most complacent of critics, has suggested in *Le Temps* that a theatre should be founded exclusively for the production of foreign plays; and in *Comœdia* a number of other critics support the demand. M. Lenormand, himself a successful playwright, goes so far as to declare that "it is absolutely scandalous that Paris is deprived of Bernard Shaw, Strindberg, Tchegov and Synge." However, one may be fairly certain that nothing will come of the proposal. The present condition of the French theatre is a good way behind that of our own. At the moment only the Vieux Colombier has a programme worth stirring oneself to see.

* * * *

The news that Marie Bashkirtseff's mother died a few days ago at Nice, at the age of eighty-seven, is at the first reading almost incredible. Marie Bashkirtseff's "Journal" achieved its instant fame before this generation was even born. Somehow, if it had been Marie's daughter instead of her mother who had died, we should have been less surprised. We were already prepared to learn that the dead lady was devoted to her daughter's memory. If, as may be assumed, the "Journal" was published with her full permission, the retention of the well-known passages describing Marie's exasperation with her mother shows that her devotion was unusually generous.

SOLILOQUIES IN ENGLAND

THE TRAGIC MASK

MASKS are arrested expressions and admirable echoes of feeling, at once faithful, discreet, and superlative. Living things in contact with the air must acquire a cuticle, and it is not urged against cuticles that they are not hearts; yet some philosophers seem to be angry with images for not being things, and with words for not being feelings. Words and images are like shells, no less integral parts of nature than are the substances they cover, but better addressed to the eye and more open to observation. I would not say that substance exists for the sake of appearance, or faces for the sake of masks, or the passions for the sake of poetry and virtue. Nothing arises in nature for the sake of anything else; all these phases and products are involved equally in the round of existence, and it would be sheer wilfulness to praise the germinal phase on the ground that it is vital, and to denounce the explicit phase on the ground that it is dead and sterile. We might as justly despise the seed for being merely instrumental, and glorify the full-blown flower, or the conventions of art, as the highest achievement and fruition of life. Substance is fluid, and, since it cannot exist without some form, is always ready to exchange one form for another; but sometimes it falls into a settled rhythm or recognizable vortex, which we call a nature, and which sustains an interesting form for a season. These sustained forms are enshrined in memory and worshipped in moral philosophy, which often assigns to them a power to create and to reassert themselves which their precarious status is very far from justifying. But they are all in all to the mind: art and happiness lie in pouring and repouring the molten metal of existence through some such tenable mould.

Masks are accordingly glorious things; we are instinctively as proud of designing and wearing them as we are of inventing and using words. The blackest tragedy is festive; the most pessimistic philosophy is an enthusiastic triumph of thought. The life which such expressions seem to arrest or to caricature would be incomplete without them; indeed, it would be blind and abortive. It is no interruption to experience to master experience, as tragedy aspires to do; nor is it an interruption to sink into its episodes and render them consummate, which is the trick of comedy. On the contrary, without such playful pauses and reflective interludes, our round of motions and sensations would be deprived of that intellectual dignity which relieves it and renders it morally endurable—the dignity of knowing what we are doing, even if it be foolish in itself, and with what probable issue. Tragedy, the knowledge of death, raises us to that height. In fancy and for a moment, it brings our mortal wills into harmony with our destiny, with the wages of existence, and with the silence beyond. These discoveries of reason have fixed the expression of the tragic mask, half horror and half sublimity. Such is the countenance of man when turned towards death and eternity and looking beyond all his endeavours at the Gorgon face of the truth. This is not to say that it is less human, or less legitimate, to look in other directions and to make other faces. But whether the

visage we assume be a joyful or a sad one, in adopting and emphasizing it we define our sovereign temper. Henceforth, so long as we continue under the spell of this self-knowledge, we do not merely live but act; we compose and play our chosen character, we wear the buskin of deliberation, we defend and idealize our passions, we encourage ourselves eloquently to be what we are, devoted or scornful or careless or austere; we soliloquize (before an imaginary audience) and we wrap ourselves gracefully in the mantle of our inalienable part. So draped, we solicit applause and expect to die amid a universal hush. We profess to live up to the fine sentiments we have uttered, as we try to believe in the religion we profess. The greater our difficulties the greater our zeal. Under our published principles and plighted language we must assiduously hide all the inequalities of our moods and conduct, and this without hypocrisy, since our deliberate character is more truly ourself than is the flux of our involuntary dreams. The portrait we paint in this way and exhibit as our true person may well be in the grand manner, with column and curtain and distant landscape and finger pointing to the terrestrial globe or to the Yorick-skull of philosophy; but if this style is native to us and our art is vital, the more it transmutes its model the deeper and truer art it will be. The severe bust of an archaic sculpture, scarcely humanizing the block, will express a spirit far more justly than the man's dull morning looks or casual grimaces. Everyone who is sure of his mind, or proud of his office, or anxious about his duty assumes a tragic mask. He deposes it to be himself and transfers to it almost all his vanity. While still alive and subject, like all existing things, to the undermining flux of his own substance, he has crystallized his soul into an idea, and more in pride than in sorrow he has offered up his life on the altar of the Muses. Self-knowledge, like any art or science, renders its subject-matter in a new medium, the medium of ideas, in which it loses its old dimensions and its old pace. Our animal habits are transmuted by conscience into loyalties and duties, and we become "persons" or masks. Art, truth and death turn everything to marble.

That life should be able to reach such expression in the realm of eternal form is a sublime and wonderful privilege, but it is tragic, and for that reason distasteful to the animal in man. A mask is not responsive; you must not speak to it as to a living person, you must not kiss it. If you do, you will find the cold thing repulsive and ghastly. It is only a husk, empty, eyeless, brittle, and glazed. The more comic its expression the more horrible it will prove, being that of a corpse. The animal in man responds to things according to their substance, edible, helpful, or plastic; his only joy is to push his way victoriously through the material world, till a death stops him which he never thought of and, in a sense, never experiences. He is not in the least interested in picturing what he is or what he will have been; he is intent only on what is happening to him now or may happen to him next. But when the passions see themselves in the mirror of reflection, what they behold is a tragic mask. This is the escutcheon of human nature, in which its experience is emblazoned. In so far as men are men

at all, or men of honour, they militate under this standard and are true to their colours. Whatever refuses to be idealized in this way, they are obliged to disown and commit to instant oblivion. It will never do for a mind merely to live through its passions or its perceptions; it must discern recognizable objects, in which to centre its experience and its desires; it must choose names and signs for them, and these names and symbols, if they are to perform their function in memory and intercourse, must be tightly conventional. What could be more unseemly than a fault in grammar, or in many a case more laughable and disconcerting? Yet any solecism, if it were once stereotyped and made definitely significant, would become an idiom: it would become a good verbal mask. What is not covered in this way by some abiding symbol can never be recovered; the dark flood of existence carries it down bodily. Only in some word or conventional image can the secret of one moment be flashed to another moment; and even when there is no one ready to receive the message, or able to decipher it, at least the poet in his soliloquy has uttered his mind and raised his monument in his own eyes; and in expressing his life he has found it.

G. SANTAYANA.

THE PROSPECTUS

THE doctor's writing desk was placed sideways to the central window, which looked upon a long, narrow, uncultivated garden. Within the faded black railings at the far end stood three lanky poplars and a huge black board. The latter object presented a gold-lettered inscription to the street:

THE LAKE SCHOOL OF LITERATURE.

PRINCIPAL: DR. JULIUS BALLANTYNE.

All the houses in the street were of the same shape, narrow, flat, perpendicular, and many of them had been converted from their original uses to cheap hotels and uninviting dental parlours. Amidst the notices "Bed and Breakfast, 3/6," and the little glass cases of artificial teeth, the board of the Lake School of Literature shone unexpected and almost enigmatic. Nevertheless, the Lake School of Literature had been in existence for five years. No one quite understood this phenomenon, just as no one quite understood by what right Dr. Julius Ballantyne called himself a doctor. The doctor himself was indulgent to inquiries. He never answered them, and never suggested that he agreed that any mystery was involved; it was merely as if he expected people to be ignorant or stupid about certain perfectly simple things.

The light was definitely twilight when the doctor at last finished his task. He pushed back his chair, stretched his arms and yawned noisily. Blinking kindly at the little pile of manuscript, he opened a drawer, took two acid drops from a paper bag, and sucked them with audible deliberation. Still with the same air of sleepy satisfaction, he presently gave three pushes at a little white stud let in the side of his desk. This summons was not answered for some time, and then a young man, very tall and fair, wearing a morning coat, dark grey trousers and white spats, and carrying a fountain pen in his hand, opened the

door. "You want me?" he said a trifle petulantly in an impure tenor voice. The doctor waved his hand, apologetically, towards his manuscript.

"I'd rather like you to read that," he said.

The young man hesitated for a moment, and then, "The new prospectus?" he said pleasantly.

He seized a leather-covered chair and dragged it over the thick blue carpet to the window, gathering up the manuscript with a long, flexible arm in his passage. The doctor placed his right foot on his left knee and began to tap his irregular white teeth with the end of his fountain pen, eyeing the young man with frequent little side glances as he steadily turned the pages. Arrived at the end, the young man turned again to the first page, which he read attentively.

"Very good," he remarked deliberately as he stretched over his chair to place the manuscript on the doctor's table.

The doctor continued to tap his teeth.

"Really, awfully good," said the young man. "There's just one point"—he reflected a moment and then continued fluently, "Don't you think that if you said less about natural ability, if you made the whole thing seem more a matter that can be—er—*acquired*, that you—"

"No," said the doctor quickly. "It isn't true."

The young man looked at him for a moment, undecided.

"I mean it isn't true in itself," explained the doctor, "and it's wrong psychology." He paused for a moment. "The whole appeal of this place is to youngsters who think they *have* got natural ability—as they may have," he added in parenthesis, "and the notion that we think the whole thing's a trade would only repel them. Besides which, you know, Groom," and his little brown eyes became lifeless, "it isn't a trade."

There was an awkward silence for a moment.

"It isn't a trade," pursued the doctor coldly, "and we don't teach it as a trade. I'm not blaming you, you know"—with a sudden keen glance—"it's natural you should find something a little—deliberate—about the work here. Perhaps we'd better discuss the matter." He tapped his teeth meditatively.

"What do you really think of my prospectus?" he said quietly.

Mr. Groom's first emotion was one of surprise. He suddenly realized that he knew very little of the doctor. His second thought was that he must be wary. And then came a little hot flush of indignation. Something in the doctor's air of passionless acceptance decided him to indulge it.

"Well, frankly," he said, "I find it—er—flamboyant."

"Insincere?" asked the doctor with interest.

Mr. Groom hesitated, and then that little streak of anger carried him on. "Yes," he said flatly.

The doctor looked puzzled. He tapped his teeth for some moments. He spoke in a tone of friendly detachment. "I don't think it is, you know. There's some exaggeration, perhaps." He mused again. "It's a bit cheap, perhaps, but I don't think"—he wrinkled his brow—"I don't think it's insincere."

Again Mr. Groom's emotions and opinions were deflected.

"I didn't quite mean that," he said hastily. "I meant rather that"—he plunged—"that it was in bad taste."

"Cheap?" said the doctor, nodding almost affably.

"Well—," began Mr. Groom, and left it at that.

The two men regarded one another in silence. Mr. Groom's expression was still perplexed and as if he were on his guard. The formal and businesslike chief he had known for the last year was surprising him very greatly. The doctor merely looked slightly melancholy. Finally the doctor roused himself. He uncrossed his legs and bent forward. He spoke with conviction:

"We have to use what we've got, Groom. We have to do what we can. What you dislike about that prospectus is just what makes this school a success. You say it's cheap. I see what you mean, although I don't feel about it the same way." He paused and continued mechanically: "The whole world is a bit cheap, and that's exactly where I come in. That's why I can really achieve something—not much, of course, because I'm not on a big scale myself." Something in Mr. Groom's expression made him break off with a smile. "I suppose this affects you like a barrel-organ," he said with an unexpected flash of humour. "What were you doing—correcting essays?"

Mr. Groom breathed more freely and was at the same time conscious of an odd feeling of disappointment. "Yes," he said, adapting himself instantly. He assumed his ordinary formal tone. "Young Fente's is the best. He has written a really remarkable little sketch."

The doctor nodded indifferently. "And Hackett?" he queried.

It was Mr. Groom's turn to look indifferent. "As usual," he replied. "Quite workmanlike." He chose the word deliberately.

The doctor looked thoughtful. "We shall lose that young man directly he sells anything," he remarked.

"But he would write a testimonial," Mr. Groom ventured to add.

"I hope so," returned the doctor imperturbably. He sat in silence, thinking, and then rose suddenly from his chair. "Come, come," he said with impatient affability. "Don't be down on the world so much."

Mr. Groom also rose, and stood waiting, a trifle stiffly. He found the doctor's next remark extremely enigmatic.

"I speak to you as a friend," said Dr. Ballantyne solemnly.

He waited a moment, smiled faintly at Mr. Groom's studiously expressionless face, gave him a little nod of dismissal, and turned again patiently to his desk.

JOHN W. N. SULLIVAN.

Poetry

DICK DEAD

Dick dead?—Rare songster in his time,
Let him not pass without a rhyme!
Eight years he spent with us, brought from
His soon-forgotten woodland home,
And for eight years, with all his heart,
To cheer the world Dick did his part.
Four years his prime: and then I heard
The piping of an older bird,

Though, Edward, you forbore to say
That Dick had pass'd his golden day.
But two years more—ah! song and youth!
Ev'n Master's love must now say truth.
Yet, though the fire, the voice, had gone,
Dick, like an old bard, still sang on;
And two years yet he strove with age,
Till Death tapp'd kindly at his cage.

Say not "poor Dick" if, when the dim
And dead return, you mention him.
True, his declining days were sad;
But all life moves 'tween good and bad:
True, too, he heard advised (ah, shame!)
Ungentle word from gentle dame;
For song and sweet days gone, no reck)
To pinch his skull, or twist his neck.
"So feeble and so stiff with age,
He might grow lousy in his cage!"
But, Dick, I had no fear for you:
Your Master's heart I knew too true
To put poor beings out the way
So lightly in their weak old day.
Though breath was scant, and song was fled,
We waited, Dick, till you were dead.

Think of him when, new come, a shy
And strange regard was in his eye;
When feathers golden-brown and red
Were beautiful on breast and head;
How he grew bolder day by day,
And how his linnet soul got way,
And song was rich from rosy dawn
Until the daylight had withdrawn.

Think of him in the sad and sere:
For man keeps young his own heart-cheer
If he with no less love behold
The blooming and the prime grow old.
Not (say it in Dick's praise!) that he
Needed a waste of sympathy;
For blood of some proud, passionate sire
Ran in his little heart of fire.
Let come who would too close his cage,
It roused the untamed linnet rage:
With wings uplift for battle fray,
And open beak, he stood at bay;
Would do until his dying day;
And in his cheery song of life
Rang something of triumphant strife.

But song and strife are done, and thou
Hear'st not our words, O sweet Bird, now.
H. BARBER.

RAISING THE MONOLITH

A shaft of moon from the cloud-hurried sky
Has coursed the wide dark heath, but nowhere found
One paler patch to illumine—oats nor rye,
Chalk-pit nor waterpool nor sandy ground—
Till, checked by our thronged faces on the mound
(A wedge of whiteness), universally
Strained backward from the task that holds us bound,
It beams on set jaw and hate-maddened eye.

The vast stone tilts, turns, topples—in its fall
Spreads death; but we who live raise a shrill chant
Of joy for sacrifice cleansing us all.

Once more we heave. Erect in earth we plant
The interpreter of our dumb furious call
Outraging Heaven, pointing "I want, I want."

ROBERT GRAVES.

REVIEWS

JOHN CLARE

JOHN CLARE: POEMS, CHIEFLY FROM MANUSCRIPT. Edited by Edmund Blunden and Alan Porter. (Cobden-Sanderson. 10s. 6d. net.)

THE criticism of a poet who, like some sleeping seed planted by pious hands, first germinates in our own generation, is a knotty privilege. The metaphor is not inexact, for Messrs. Blunden and Porter's edition of John Clare is the first to present a full-length portrait both of the man and his work. In his own age Clare was the victim of idle fashion, a flower which faded into the weed of common day, and the countryman in his smock was not (as Bloomfield certainly was) cut with artful enough rusticity to his cloth to win more than a casual glance from reputation. Between the year of his death (1864) and to-day there have been partial editions of his works, the best known being Mr. Arthur Symonds's in the Oxford series (1908), which enriched the poet by publishing additional poems from two manuscript volumes. But one cannot see all round a poet from a bibelot, and though Mr. Symonds toned down the histrionic element in the popular tradition of Clare, he was not in possession of enough material to recast the biographical corpus. This the editors of the present volume (which is printed and equipped with admirable taste and judgment) have done scrupulously, swelling the poetic material by the addition of fresh manuscript poems, arranging it chronologically with the proper divisions of Juvenilia, Middle Period and Asylum Poems, and writing a copious and faithful memoir of the poet's life which relates itself to the poems in just proportion and mutual enlightenment. Mr. Blunden in particular is fitted to do for Clare what Professor Grierson has done for Donne, Sir Sidney Colvin for Keats, and so on, since he more than compensates for what he lacks in scholarship by an extraordinary, almost mystical insight into the genius of a poet whose spirit mingles so happily with his own. The tone of the introduction is in places a trifle too apologetic, but the biography is indispensable to a just reading of the poems, and throws a much softer and (judging from the poems) truer reflection upon the tragedy of this deeply spiritual and deeply, fatalistically unfortunate character—who was yet, as the editors are the first to see, a happy and contented man—than Mr. Symonds's perfunctory sketch.

There are over 140 chosen poems in the book, and the first question to be asked of so ample and orderly a landscape is its topography. How does Clare fit into the map of his own poetic period? It is perfectly clear that he is on a divergent tack of poetic evolution from the Romantic Revivalists, proper or improper. There are bits out of the Preface to the "Lyrical Ballads" which might be modelled into one for himself, but, granted a fragment or two, Clare and the Lake Poets part company. In the whole of this volume there are only four lines which suggest that Clare had ever read a line of Wordsworth's—from "The Fallen Elm":

Thou owned a language by which hearts are stirred
Deeper than by a feeling clothed in word,
And speakest now what's known of every tongue,
Language of pity and the force of wrong.

In the same poem there is an angry reference to the enclosures, the only clear political impression (the sonnet to Buonaparte is a stiff and impersonal exercise) in the book. It cannot be too strongly stated that Clare is a poet of the spirit—a transparent spirit through which things filtered—and not of the mind; that his attitude to nature is less conscious, less formulated, less burdened (or elevated) by human or abstract preoccupations than

any other poet's in the language. Clare's men and women and children are part of the landscape—they grow and shine like flowers—part whether of the actual or the imaginative landscape, none too easy to disentangle, and not, as they are in Wordsworth, Shelley, Coleridge, Byron and Keats (in the second draft of "Hyperion"), moralized beings in a purposed relationship with the universe. Clare does indeed moralize, and frequently, not in the manner of his contemporaries, nor of the eighteenth century, but, surprising as it sounds, of the seventeenth. There is very little positive imitation of any poet or period in Clare; but, dropping the metaphysics, there is more than a stray reminder of the lyrical quietism of Marvell and Bishop King, musing upon the vanishing shows of the world, extending even to turns of phrase.

It is needless to discuss the slander upon Clare as a "better Bloomfield." The only likeness between the two men is that neither of them was a "peasant poet," and for precisely opposite reasons. Whatever the facts of Bloomfield's career, he writes about nature as from a countryfied coffee-house, and it was doubtless through his facility in generalization and personifying qualities, and in a towny diction which conveys not a single sharp image nor particular impression, that his rural Muse made such a good thing out of her borrowed clout. But Clare, whether wandering in fancy or rarefied fact, is fastidiously concrete and precise, never the eloquent professionalist, exploiting the object to the phrase. The objective, the ordinary, the plain speaking in Clare, which makes even his flattest diarizing so vivid and so individual, has been indulgently smiled upon by the wiseacres of nearly a hundred years. But it is one of his greatest virtues, and places him in the van of the romantic liberators who destroyed the professional tricks of eighteenth-century poetry. "Tasteful illumination of the night" (viz. the glowworm)—it is very rare indeed to find Clare cutting that kind of decorative figure. The one eighteenth-century poet with whom Clare is on any kind of poetic terms is Collins:

Sweet Vision, with the wild dishevelled hair,
And raiment shadowy of each wind's embrace,
Fain would I win thine harp
To one accordant theme;

or,

But now the evening curdles dark and grey,
Changing her watchet hue for sombre weed;
And creeping owls, to close the lids of day,
On drowsy wing proceed.

Both the long poems "Autumn" and "Summer Images" bear the Collins stamp, and beautiful phrases like "Here poor integrity can sit at ease" and the swallow "unsealing morning's eye" are Collins to a hair. The parallel must not be pressed too far, for Clare's experience of nature is richer, more intimate and varied than Collins's, while Collins stands more to pose; he is better balanced, and a greater master of his instrument, and his verse altogether more of a formal and symmetrical pattern. Yet Clare in his mood of elegiac repose joined to beguiling melody is the only nineteenth-century poet to take over the Collins tradition, reshape it, and bear it through all the distractions of a period abounding in poetic experiment and discovery.

Collins, of course, is an allegorical poet, and, lulled by the magic of his atmospheric effects, one is tempted to overlook his powers of detail and definition. His figures are not flesh and blood, but they perform distinct if ritual actions and gestures, and here Clare by his unforced absorption in nature surpassed his master, if master he was. It is a commonplace that Clare possessed a greater knowledge of earth and natural life than any other poet whose appeal is one of literature. Both as a man and a creator he was, I think, primarily a spiritual

type, but he did not find the gift of the spirit inconsistent with a knowledge of its material works. Now a portion of his expression is quite patently nothing more than rhymed natural history, a quite literal picking of nature's pocket without, so to speak, any reinvesting of his gains in the poetic funds. But it has not been pointed out that this side of Clare is as much detached from his general poetic significance as Tennyson's bad biology is from his picture-writing.

The real question in an attempt at justly estimating an artist who cannot any longer be handled as a minor poet is whether the body of his work translated or transliterated its material; whether, in Coleridge's words, it trusted more to the memory than the imagination; whether it observes or creates, describes or sees; whether a radical defect in imaginative will confused truth to nature with truth to poetry. The great advantage of this volume is that it helps us to come to a decision by observing the continuous growth of the poet's mind—a growth not interrupted nor diverted into new channels of expression in the Asylum period, but strangely crowned. The majority of the poems in this period, with their quickened rhythm, airier music, finer sensibility and greater freedom not from but *in* nature, are unambiguously lived in the country of imagination. But it is wholly arbitrary to assume that madness was the mother of imagination. Clare lived all his life in verse: it was food, comfort, religion, happiness—his living—and the natural play of his spirit between nature and verse explains why the external odds against him so little affected his content and serenity. And the history, the internal conflict of a poetic achievement which bears so little outward sign of it was the accommodation he nearly always sought and often found between imagination and fact, and which, when found, leaves us with the conviction that he was not only a true but a unique poet. He was unique because he solved his own special problem in his own way, and he solved it partly because of his peculiar advantages in inheriting a racial tradition in pastoral poetry and in possessing a native genius in close relationship with the soil; partly because his approach to nature is not deliberate nor in any way philosophical; and partly because his own spiritual nature was endowed with a power of identifying himself with the dumb thought, the inner life of nature, not as a visionary, but simply as a lover. In this faculty Keats alone, I think, of all the Romantic poets, is kin with him. The best poems of the Middle Period are neither pure data nor pure imagination, but an individual blend of both which does express the music of his own soul and "the inward stir of shadowed melody" in nature in one. In the Asylum period he was to become more imaginative, and at the same time more closely drawn into the truth behind the forms of nature; and when he was removed from his own place and wrote the pathetic verses about it, he might have said that he was uprooted and (with Swift) would wither at the top. But if his mind failed him, his poetic spirit did not, and what he lost in the acute sense of a particular locality, he gained in a wider interpretation.

Where Clare fell short has already been partly indicated, and his over-facility is obvious; his most serious lack, however, is in the quality of the blend between fact and imagination. It is too diffused, too seldom fused into a concentrated flame. His gentlest of spirits is as innocent of passion and intensity as of prophetic vision and of that profound nostalgia which is only content with a seventh heaven reconciling the ultimate end of human thought and feeling with the principles of all things. Nevertheless the final value of Clare is that he does not imitate, but creates his own world.

H. J. MASSINGHAM.

MR. WELLS ON RUSSIA

RUSSIA IN THE SHADOWS. By H. G. Wells. (Hodder & Stoughton. 6s. net.)

MR. WELLS has told us something of what we want to know about Russia. We had guessed that the author of "Mr. Polly" could be trusted to see the little things that count; what we had feared was that the author of "The Passionate Friends" would thin out and dissipate these perceptions into a cloud of generalities. But, fortunately, Mr. Wells does not consider that fifteen days in Russia is a sufficient preparation for these exercises; he has confined himself, reasonably closely, to what he saw. We are given a picture of the deserted streets of St. Petersburg, unswept and unrepaired, the closed and decaying shops, the infrequent trams loaded with people. We are told that there are no collars, ties, shoelaces, sheets and blankets, spoons and forks to be had. A broken glass or cup is very difficult to replace. Distinguished literary and scientific men wear no collars; a safety razor blade has to last for a year. Details of this kind do more than anything else to help us to realize the day-to-day life in St. Petersburg. The general collapse to which these details point is attributed by Mr. Wells to two factors, the vile and stupid blockade and the shortcomings of Marxist theory.

It is on the latter point that his remarks are most instructive. His attack on Marx himself is more amusing than convincing, for we doubt whether Mr. Wells, any more than ourselves, has really studied Marx. The fact that Marx is unreadable enables us to understand Mr. Wells' impatience, and even to share it; but we cannot therefore conclude that he was a solemn fool. But whether or not Marx is fairly symbolized, as Mr. Wells suggests, by his large and inextricable beard, we are certainly inclined to believe that his followers are, most of them, more solemn than wise. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat, as Mr. Wells points out, is treated by them as an end in itself. The fact that the previous capitalistic régime, by being abolished, does not become as if it had never been, is not sufficiently allowed for. Huge cities, such as St. Petersburg and Moscow, were not allowed for by the Russian Marxists. There the great buildings stand; a revolution does not abolish bricks and stone. But the Marxists had made no effective plans for giving this indestructible legacy a rôle in the new order. Doubtless these problems have been further complicated in Russia by the innate slovenliness of the Russian temperament: Mr. Wells was put in charge of a sailor who did not know his way about, and his arrangements were entrusted to a gentleman who could not make himself understood over the telephone. Doubtless this sort of thing is really typical, and it is important and must be borne in mind.

But is there a new spirit at work in Russia? Has the troika, that Gogol described, started at last? Mr. Wells tells us singularly little about this side of Russia, but we gather that he views the future with some gloom. Unless the Western nations abandon their present policy Russia will relapse into barbarism and, it may be, drag the rest of Europe with her. Already Russia is turning towards the East, a fact that Gorky views with profound apprehension. For the Asiatic elements in the Slav are only too prone to assert themselves, and the collapse of the present vestiges of civilization in Russia may mean the emergence, once more, of huge nomadic populations.

It is in his criticism of the *ideas* of the creative men in Russia at present, of Lenin and one or two others, that Mr. Wells is least satisfactory. We think this is due to an absence, on Mr. Wells's part, of a clear and definite point of view from which to judge them, and in this respect he is, once more, representative of the Western mind of his time.

ROGER BACON

OPERA HACTENUS INEDITA ROGERI BACONI.—FASC. V. SECRETUM SECRETORUM. Cum glossis et notulis tractatus brevis et utilis ad declarandum quedam obscure dicta Fratris Rogeri nunc primum edidit Robert Steele. Accedunt versio Anglicana ex Arabico edita per A. S. Fulton; versio vetusta Anglo-Normannica nunc primum edita. (Oxford, Clarendon Press. 28s. net.)

At last we have a convenient and readable form of the "Secret of Secrets." Popular and influential as the book was, it has been hitherto very difficult to get hold of a copy of the Latin version. Mr. Steele, it is true, has already done admirable service in editing old English versions, and others in various vernaculars have been accessible; but his present work really supplies a want, though its object is not to give a critical text of the Latin, but to publish Bacon's introduction and annotations.

This book, which Roger Bacon thought so valuable that he produced what we should call an edition of it, does in truth make great professions about itself. It is no less than the manual of private counsel which the greatest of thinkers, Aristotle, wrote for the greatest of conquerors, Alexander. Written of course in Greek, it was discovered by Yahya ibn Batrik (Johannes filius Patricii) in the temple of the Sun which Æsculapius built; and he translated it first into Syriac and then into Arabic. This John lived early in the ninth century. A partial Latin version was made in the twelfth century, from Arabic, by John of Seville, and a complete one in the thirteenth by Philip of Tripoli, who dedicated it to a person difficult of identification, Guido Vere (possibly one of the great Vere family), described (apparently) as Bishop of Valence (or Valencia, or even Naples), which he was not. Curiously, I note that a Bohemian book, "Solfernus," dealing with Adam's life, professes to have been translated from Arabic into Latin by a Dr. Frigonius, a converted Jew, who dedicated it to Lord Gerildus, the famous bishop of the Valencia in Tripolis.

In Mr. Steele's opinion there is no reason to doubt that Yahya ibn Batrik made the Arabic version: the discovery in the temple is, he says, common form. He also believes that there was a Syriac text from which the Arabic came, but thinks it unlikely that there was ever a Greek original of the whole book. Of course the attribution to Aristotle is to us not even plausible; but it dazzled Bacon and his contemporaries, and it occasioned the writing of many bulky books *de regimine principum*, of which the most popular was, perhaps, that of Ægidius Colonna.

Its wide diffusion in all the vernacular tongues of Europe and its numerous progeny make some acquaintance with it desirable for the student of mediæval literature, but it is not a good book. From a number of blameless precepts about conduct it passes to medicine and diet, with the rules for compounding the panacea called "gloria inestimabilis," said by some to have been invented by Adam, and other remedies, including the flesh of serpents. Astrology, alchemy, marvellous stones and plants, the Creation, the soul, are the next topics; then advice about counsellors, officials, and strategy; the composition of certain "virtuous" images and rings, and, finally, a tract on Physiognomy. That is, roughly, the order of the Latin; the order of the Arabic differs, and in it there is more about divination. The Arabic version chosen for translation here is one of two; the other, the "Western Arabic," is accessible to English readers in Dr. Gaster's translation of the Hebrew text (Royal Asiatic Society, 1907-8).

The French verse rendering, "Le Secre de Secrez," is by Pierre d'Abernun or P. de Peckham, and is printed from the only copy known, a Paris MS. (B.N. fr. 25407). It is short, and does not represent the whole of the Latin text.

Bacon's introduction to this rather unworthy book is one of the most interesting parts of Mr. Steele's volume,

as, indeed, might be expected. His hits at the ignorance of contemporaries, his allusions to current forms of divination and to the effects of an eclipse arrest the attention. About half of the introduction is taken up with an exposition of the principles of astronomy and astrology. His notes do not as a rule elucidate the text very materially, but in them, too, there is interesting matter: for example, on pp. 39 and 172, where he speaks of having seen more complete copies of Philip's translation than he now had. Chapters on magic and divination had been removed. Mr. Steele regards this as an official revision of the Latin.

The curiosities of the volume are very many, and its usefulness to mediævalists will be great. It is admirably put together and admirably printed, and Mr. Steele is to be cordially thanked and congratulated.

M. R. JAMES.

MORE NOTES ON TCHEHOV

THE SCHOOLMISTRESS; AND OTHER STORIES. By Anton Tchegov. Translated by Constance Garnett. (Chatto & Windus. 4s. 6d. net.)

THIS book contains some of the finest stories that ever Tchegov wrote, stories into which his quintessence was distilled. "Exile," "Misery" and the "Cattle-dealers" belong to this superlative class.

We know this, but to say it in these words seems intolerably crude and meaningless. What does it avail to say that we are haunted by the memory of an exquisite fragrance? We see rainbows through tears, but how shall we recapture them? In what words shall we imprison a beauty such as this? How satisfy the devil that urges insistently: "Define, define"?

Define, define. Tchegov himself could not define. Not one, not even the wisest, of his characters could define. Old Fyodor the shoemaker, having tasted wealth, refuses the devil's compact:

Some were able to drive in a carriage, and others to sing songs at the top of their voice and to play the concertina, but one and the same thing, the same grave, was awaiting all alike, and there was nothing in life for which one would give the devil even a tiny scrap of one's soul.

The tiniest scrap of one's soul is precious. That is true; but it is a truth in which Tchegov's secret is so hidden that it is lost. What is this precious and inalienable soul, what is its colour and quality? How came it to be a window through which a great artist saw life as it never had been seen before? What glass discovered to him these miraculous emanations invisible to other eyes?

Why, if he was so tender, were his eyes not blinded with tears? How did he see so exquisitely and so steadily? And what, in truth, did he see? Can we truly say no more than that he saw beauty—beauty one, indivisible, stretched like a wind-swayed gossamer over the vast whole of life; beauty precarious and unique, never pausing, changing incessantly, like the face of that Russian girl on whom all eyes were turned at the wayside station?

Standing at the window talking, the girl, shrugging at the evening damp, continually looking round at us, at one moment put her arms akimbo, at the next raised her hands to her head to straighten her hair, talked, laughed, while her face at one moment wore an expression of wonder, the next of horror, and I don't remember a moment when her face and body were at rest. The whole secret and magic of her beauty lay just in these tiny, infinitely elegant movements, in her smile, in the play of her face, in her rapid glances at us, in the combination of the subtle grace of her movements with her youth, her freshness, the purity of her soul that sounded in her laugh and voice, and with the weakness we love so much in children, in birds, in fawns and in young trees . . .

"So—o!" . . . the officer muttered with a sigh when, after the second bell, we went back to our compartment.

And what that "So—o" meant I will not undertake to decide.

Perhaps he was sad, and did not want to go away from the beauty and the spring evening into the stuffy train; or perhaps he like me, was unaccountably sorry for the beauty, for himself, and for me and for all the passengers . . .

Yes, beauty of this kind lies near to the secret of Tchegov. We have to crowd into the word an infinity of ugliness and pain, for this beauty includes all life; rather it is only visible to one who shuts the gates of his soul to no single experience. It is not the illusion imposed by a trick of vision, but a unique and essential element of life.

And what some are pleased to call Tchegov's pessimism is not pessimism at all. Tchegov had no philosophy—no artist has—but an attitude; and it was the attitude of the perfect, ideal artist—dispassionate and infinitely tender. His sadness was not the sadness of one who weeps over frustrated human purposes and the pain of mankind; but the sadness inseparable from the contemplation of perfect beauty. For beauty comes to us with a clear prescriptive claim to eternity, yet it is the most fragile of all our visions.

The combination of dispassionateness and extreme tenderness is strange, but strange chiefly because it is, for it implies the mastery of unusually keen human reactions by an æsthetic impulse that is organic. These rare natures, one might almost say, turn to art because nothing else will save them from being overwhelmed by their experience; they are compelled to detachment by the vehemence of their own sensibility. But their detachment is not philosophic, not intellectual—these detachments are possible only to an impoverished sensibility; they are an attempted justification of an incapacity for experience. The dispassionateness of a Tchegov is of another, and a higher order; it is the necessary condition of maintaining sensibility at its most sensitive, and experience at its most comprehensive. Our human reactions to human experience must quickly become intolerable, unless, like the average man, we forget, or, like the intellectualist, we sterilize them. A Tchegov does neither, not primarily because he is artist, but because he is human, all too human. He is driven to art by the excess of his humanity, and only those are "full" artists who suffer a compulsion of this kind. As Tchegov himself said of the great novelists before him, "they had axes to grind." He imagined that he himself had no axe to grind. It was the same axe, really, only he ground it differently.

Tchegov, by an effort of the creative will, converted his intense human emotions into æsthetic emotions. He held the humanity that desolated him with pity and delight as it were at arm's length in order that he might feel it all, and that the force of one emotion should not dull him to another. His pity and delight were transformed; his delight in human courage changed to a delight in the contemplation of the beautiful and infinite whole of which human courage is only a fragmentary part; his pity at human frustration changed to the regret that consummate beauty must awaken in the mind which discovers it. It is not by the sense of wasted lives that we are haunted when we read his stories, but by the evanescent perfection of the life which he reveals. When Iona the cabdriver, in "Misery," after trying in vain to tell his passengers that his son is dead, turns at last to his horse and says,

"That's how it is, old girl . . . Kuzma Tonitch is gone . . . He said good-bye to me . . . He went and died for no reason . . . Now, suppose you had a little colt, and you were own mother to that little colt . . . And all at once that same little colt went and died . . . You'd be sorry, wouldn't you?"

our instant and abiding impression is one, not of sorrow, but of beauty. Our little lives are rounded off by an exquisite and inscrutable harmony. When the Tartar turns on the old Siberian ferryman in "Exile" and stammers in his broken Russian: "He is good . . . good; but you are bad! You are bad!" we feel not that the Tartar is right of wrong, but the last incredible note has been sounded in our scarce-believing ears by which the delicate pattern of life is finally revealed.

J. M. M.

THE WAR OF JENKINS'S EAR

THE NAVY IN THE WAR OF 1739-48. By H. W. Richmond, Rear-Admiral. 3 vols. (Cambridge University Press. 126s.)

GREAT has been the advance in the writing of naval history since Admiral Mahan defined the doctrine of sea power. The phrase, it may be, was not unknown to Thucydides; the idea was present to Gibbon when he described the campaigns of Belisarius, but the American writer converted it into an article of faith from a furtive opinion. Wars are no longer chopped up into compartments, with a meaningless "meanwhile," as a corridor; but once the interplay of naval and land operations has been grasped, they cease to be an idle study and become a philosophy, though a squalid one. Now no war was ever more foolish in its origin than that popularly known as the war of Jenkins's ear. Our differences with Spain over the maltreatment of Jenkins and other sailors by the coastguards could have been settled by a money payment; they were indeed so arranged by Walpole under the Convention of the Prado, but an unscrupulous Opposition swept him off his feet. Even after the intervention of France had lent purpose to the contest, a purpose intensified when that Power threatened to dominate Europe at the expense of Austria, no "decisive events" declared themselves, no Rodney or Nelson appeared, though Anson and Hawke did, and hostilities ended in what Lord Stanhope and Lecky have agreed to regard as a sterile draw. In spite of these depressing considerations, Rear-Admiral Richmond has contrived to write a thoroughly interesting book, and one productive of many lessons both in strategy and tactics.

It is interesting to note how often Admiral Richmond harks back to Cromwell. The memory of the Protector and his firm conduct of foreign affairs were invoked by Carteret and Pulteney when they belaboured the alleged pacificism of Walpole and Newcastle. Cromwell's disposition of his naval squadrons, Cromwell's instructions to his officers, and Cromwell's designs in the West Indies are constantly quoted in these pages by way of contrast to the indecision and makeshifts of the Pelhams. In other words, the value of a controlling mind over warfare is immense, provided that mind knows how to delegate authority. The Walpole-Pelham oligarchy was the worst instrument imaginable for carrying on hostilities even against the effete unreadiness of Spain. The First Minister sulked, and his one preoccupation was to limit the area of the fighting. Newcastle, at once credulous and suspicious, listened to all and took serious advice from none. The machinery frequently jammed, since the Admiralty found itself at loggerheads with the Privy Council. And what an Admiralty was that in which Lord Winchelsea was First Commissioner! That deplorable set of political hacks ignored naval opinion, and complacently allowed the French to collect a stronger squadron than ours in the Channel at a time that England's own policy was leading straight to war. We had been fighting Spain, and then Spain and France in combination, for six years, and Anson had circumnavigated the globe, before his country's necessities brought that clear-headed man to the Board of Admiralty. Then matters improved, and whereas Norris and Vernon had wasted their energies in expostulation, Anson, whether ashore or afloat, got things done. He seems, too, to have had an efficient colleague in the little cricketing Duke of Bedford, who, jobber though he may have been, had, like all the Russells, administration in his blood. His letter to Anson on the duties of the Western Squadron, which finally smothered French trade, is refreshingly lucid.

Without any adequate conception of warfare, the Government merely carried on. Such was our weakness in the Channel that, at the outset, Spanish privateers,

swarmed in home waters and inflicted heavy losses on our shipping. Later on there came two serious plans of invasion, in 1744 and 1745, the first of which, if Marshal Saxe had been allowed to rush his 10,000 men across, had fair possibilities of success. Our squadrons were scattered over the ocean without design, and neither blockade nor the destruction of the enemy's bases received proper consideration. Blockade was, of course, no easy occupation, what with the inability of sailing ships to keep the sea against foul winds, the necessity of sending them into port for careening, and the scourge of scurvy, which explains, without altogether justifying, Dr. Johnson's scathing comment on the sailor's life. Anyhow the Mediterranean squadron, though strong enough to blockade one harbour, could not hold up two, and thanks largely to confused instructions from home, the Spaniards used to get out. We seem to remember a similar lapse not long ago in those waters which hurried Turkey into the Great War. Vernon's capture of Porto Bello on the South American coast was well-conceived, but it had no successor other than Sir Peter Warren's taking of Louisbourg, the one instance in which soldiers and sailors acted harmoniously together. And Newcastle's feather-headedness was never more quaintly illustrated than when he switched off the expedition intended for Quebec to attack l'Orient, though, as the officers appointed to command it complained, they had no maps, charts or pilots. Here again some passages in Sir Ian Hamilton's Diary present a certain parallel.

And yet the Navy played its part during the protracted hostilities. In the Mediterranean it prevented the enemy from sending troops and supplies to Italy by sea and made them take the long land route. It protected our commerce across the Atlantic and to the Indies while the Western Squadron, cruising in the Bay, put a stranglehold on France and forced a Power, which was everywhere victorious in Europe, to sue for peace. As Admiral Richmond well remarks, what brought us through the war with some measure of success was that the enemy made more mistakes than we did. In the first place, the Spaniards and French, though combining their strategy on land, acted without concert on the sea. Secondly, they adopted an essentially defensive theory of warfare, harrying our shipping by a *guerre de course*, but confining their navy to the protection of convoy. In that way they did great things, and Conflans' outward and homeward voyages must always remain a model of such enterprises. But at the close the French treasury was empty and the peasants starving, because their navy never struck home.

Admiral Richmond has a natural leaning towards the man on the deck as opposed to the man in the office. When their muddled instructions, and the neglect to send frigates, the eyes of a blockading force, are remembered—the perplexities of the unhappy Haddock, Mathews, Knowles and others must always appeal to human sympathy. But the spectacle of poor old Mathews using a mainpike at the breech of one of the guns when he ought to have been fighting the fleet off Toulon, with Lestock sulking in the rear, cannot have been an inspiring one, and Mitchell cannot have inspired confidence when, instead of engaging Conflans, he sent messages down the line asking for opinions. Tactical doctrine had, no doubt, been allowed to languish, and the rigidity of Article 21 (on which Admiral Richmond furnishes an important appendix) hampered fleets in action, notably at the battle of Toulon. But, somehow, one cannot help feeling that when the occasion arrived, the man was too often wanting. Even Boscawen, who was to do great things in after years, made an appalling mess of it when he tried to take Pondicherry. In his later exploits he had, to be sure, Chatham behind him, not Newcastle, who always let naval officers down if he could.

L.L. S.

WHAT IS ART?

ASPECTS OF LITERATURE. By J. Middleton Murry. (Collins, 10s. net.)

THE most marked characteristic of the present age is a continual disintegration of the consciousness; more or less deliberately in every province of man's spiritual life the reins are being thrown on the horse's neck." It is time, Mr. Murry feels, for humanism to reassert itself, both in ethics and in art. So feeling, he proceeds to do something singular: he tries to reassert humanism.

The oddity does not consist in his seeing that something is wrong with the age and trying to say what it is: everyone, except the purely impressionist critic (if any exist now), does that. Some lament that the all-importance of æsthetically significant form has been forgotten, others that we are infinitely removed from the life of reason; and Mr. T. S. Eliot, polite but furious, suggests to the age that, on every ground, it is far more disgusting than it had imagined in its most depressed moments. But the work of such critics and poets, in so far as creative, is a creation in defiance of the age; nay more, in deliberate abstraction from it. Mr. Clive Bell cultivates significant form, Dr. Santayana the life of reason, Mr. Eliot his rage: all let the age go hang. Not so Mr. Murry. He is driven by a different kind of impulse, and it is worth while trying to understand what that impulse is. It is not merely that he is a preacher, that he wants to reform us. That is in a sense true; but it is not the whole truth, and it does not give what is really characteristic of him as a critic.

It may help to define him if we notice that human beings fall roughly into two classes according to their way of reacting to the fact that some of the contents of the world are felt to be more valuable than others. For all of us that fact is more than merely interesting; it is the occasion of all our higher pleasures and pains, and is bound up with our likes and dislikes, our passions and our prejudices. But only for some of us is the difference between good and evil vital, in the sense that the perception of it is the organizing principle of our lives. The distinction is more easily felt than defined; but we believe that it is the smallness of this latter class that Mr. Murry has in mind, and its progressive diminution that he alleges, when he talks about the disintegration of our consciousness. If a man belong to this class, he is bound, if he has any sensibility for literature, to gravitate towards some such position as Mr. Murry's. The mere fact that he cares about art will make him impatient of those who would divorce art from the whole experience of man as a moral being. His æsthetic theory, if he has one, will not be reached by logic, but will be a reflection of his attitude towards life; and it will tend, if not to identify art and morality, at any rate to posit a close connection between them. Hardly will he be able to believe that anyone can be a great or even a sound artist whose every experience is not coloured, organized, purified and intensified by his awareness of the difference between good and evil. Finally, if he be a literary critic, his aim will be to make all that he writes a direct expression of this all-pervading conception of value, a practical restoration of the difference between good and evil to its spiritual primacy. That is what Mr. Murry means by reasserting "humanism"; for all values, he observes, are anthropocentric. To attempt anything of the kind is strange nowadays.

Is this attitude justified? Two kinds of tests may be applied, the theoretical and the practical. Conceivably, our assent might be compelled by argument to a formula; or we might be made to feel that in practice no other method so enlarges our understanding of particular artists. Mr. Murry uses both methods. On the theoretical side it can hardly be denied that he is weak. But we ought

not to jump from that fact to the conclusion that his general attitude is unsound; for the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and equally can it hardly be denied that the method produces in his hands highly significant results.

Consider, for instance, his treatment of Tchegov. Here is a writer whom we all to-day feel to be peculiarly ours, but about whom, before Mr. Murry, the critics have said nothing worth a moment's attention. Mr. Murry is able to do more than gibber platitudes precisely because he believes that no one can be a great artist who has not taken a step—a *salto mortale*—which he describes as a shifting of the angle of vision until a "unity in multiplicity" is discerned. Apply this to Tchegov, and you see that the problem becomes to discover wherein lies the difference between the sort of unity expressed by his work and that of other great artists; and when Mr. Murry points out that, for the artist, the essentially modern problem is to find a method that will do justice to our enhanced sense of the multiplicity of life, Tchegov's achievement begins to assume at his hands not so much a new, as a deeper, a more intimate significance. But its peculiar unity, it may be objected, is still not defined. Logically defined it is not; but it is described: first by reference to its aesthetic quality—the beauty that comes of disinterested, contemplative acceptance of life, and then by reference to its moral quality—the discipline and candour with which Tchegov "squeezed the slave out of himself." And it is because he brings these two aspects together and tries to show their interdependence that Mr. Murry is able to get near the heart of his subject. If we are looking for evidence that the "humanistic" theory can provide the working critic with a fruitful method, the notes on Tchegov must be our central and typical example. But there are others here almost as striking, and of these the paper on Keats, occasioned by Sir Sidney Colvin's biography, is especially instructive. It is surely a remarkable fact that, after a century of discussion, it has been reserved for Mr. Murry to discern with what a gathering together of the spirit Keats, just before his collapse, was breaking what new and strange poetic ground, and to assess the place which the *Indiction* to "Hyperion" occupies in Keats's development. We had the letters, but we had not the light by which Mr. Murry reads them. Positive successes like these assuredly raise a presumption in favour of the validity of his position. Some will find even stronger confirmation in the certainty with which he discloses the inward weakness of those poets, such as Mr. Yeats, in whom the vital spark has failed.

Such instances, however, will satisfy only readers who happen to agree that Mr. Murry does get inside the skin of Tchegov, of Keats, of Mr. Yeats; and we are not sure that even they ought to be so easily satisfied. For what is at issue is nothing less than our whole view of life, and in an affair of such moment it may justly be urged that a few happy strokes are not enough. Mr. Murry is not chatting about books; he is reasserting humanism; and to challenge him to systematize and formulate his position is only to take him at his word. Here we confess to some uneasiness, not merely because he is too quick to say, "Away with logic," and to condemn the "intellectual dogma" of Rousseau's age "that words must express definite things," but also because of his temperamental bent towards a kind of writing that can best be described as pregnant. Unity in multiplicity, centres, foci, radiations, organic relations, planes—his pages are peppered with expressions like these, each referring to each and hinting some important meaning that still eludes us. Skilful and suggestive though his use of metaphors often is, too often he seems not quite sharply conscious of the boundaries between the symbols he manipulates and the

things for which they stand. The fact is that his grasp of his principles is as yet too exclusively emotional, too little rational; the cloudy language in which they are apt to find expression is only not displeasing because both his grasp and his emotion (unlike those of the hack journalist or the hack philosopher) are felt to be genuine. This often touches his phrasing with beauty, for all its tantalizing slipperiness. Again (and this is much), the honesty and valiance of his effort to drag forth meaning from the womb of darkness are patent. Perhaps this midwifery is most nearly successful when his sense of Thomas Hardy's greatness brings him to grips with the question, What is poetic creation?

Here the doctrine of unity in multiplicity trembles on the edge of definition. The great poet (and Hardy has "finally discovered unity") is he whose "reaction to an episode has behind and within it a reaction to the universe"; which does not mean, we gather, that the supreme poetic act involves, at the moment of creation, a perception that the universe is One in any transcendental sense. What Mr. Murry asserts seems rather to be that the apprehension of particular objects or episodes is only then genuinely æsthetic when they are seen as significant, and that they can only be seen as significant by a spirit whose particular apprehensions have *all* been co-ordinated in a special way. But in what way precisely? Here Mr. Murry fails us; for although he mentions several marks by which the great poet can be distinguished from ordinary beings—as the selflessness of his contemplation, the purity of his experience, and the fact that, when the moment of creation comes, he knows what he is looking for—he never really tells us what this integration of the spirit is. All we know is that it is an integration and that we all ought to have it.

So we are brought back to the fundamental connection between art and morals, which yet remains a mystery. If we turn to the paper (the first in the book) in which the strings are pulled together, we find ourselves referred to the Greeks. Art, extracting from the particular its universal significance, is "the revelation of the ideal as a principle of activity in human life," and the ideal of the good life is inevitably æsthetic; so that Mr. Murry's doctrine comes to be, for him, merely an amplification, in the light of the more complex modern consciousness, of the "imitation" theory of Plato and Aristotle. But we doubt whether even this will placate the scoffers, who might, for one thing, question whether anything remotely similar was indeed implicit in the germ of Greek thought. A more pertinent objection is this: how could Mr. Murry's theory cover the visual and the non-representative arts? To them, all-embracing though it be, it seems, at least as here set out, to have no relevance—a point which suggests that nothing is to be gained by merely indicating, however pregnantly, that beauty and goodness are more or less the same thing at bottom. In fact, the position of the formalists must be impregnable until the difference between the two is clearly defined. For we cannot know how they are related until we know precisely what either is. To that end an investigation of morality and value, those ambiguous notions, seems first required. In other words, Mr. Murry's critical principles, if he wishes to base them on an æsthetic theory, are such that he is bound to work out a theory of ethics.

But a theory might well be a dead thing, and meanwhile Mr. Murry's principles are a living, working corpus. They express an inner impulse; the book reveals a mind in action round a centre; it is not a mosaic, like the section of a sausage. That is its attractiveness. Yet it was written as journalism, week by week. That work done on those terms should have the strength and coherence that we have tried to adumbrate is astonishing.

S. W.

THE BISHOP OF THOSE WITHOUT

THE LETTERS OF GEORGE TYRRELL. Edited by M. D. Petre. (Fisher Unwin. 16s. net.)

DR. SCHILLER has observed that "among the great discoveries of science in the latter part of the nineteenth century was that of the existence of religion. Of its existence, that is, as a fact in the world of human experience, and so as a scientific subject, to be studied with all the reverence with which science welcomes such facts as it has consented to recognize." Since these words were written in 1908 the branch of science in question has, in this country, made remarkably little progress. Specialists may have discussed isolated points with one another in their own language, but so far as the general intelligent public is concerned, sentiment and epigram have been the substitute offered and contentedly accepted. The last person to grapple seriously with the problem of religious experience and issue communiqués of the progress of his struggle in a tongue that everyone could understand was the secularized Jesuit and excommunicated priest who died in the middle of his battle in 1909, and whose intimate thoughts are at last revealed in these letters.

George Tyrrell was not well placed to pursue his investigation of religion as an empirical fact within the consciousness of man. As a priest of the Roman Catholic Church he was bound to the defence of a complicated dogmatic structure which limits, explains, criticizes and transcends the phenomena of immanent religion as they are classified in such a work as James's "Varieties of Religious Experience." In the course of years Tyrrell had come to the belief that while the religious experience was a profound reality, the traditional theological interpretation of it was worthless, except as an image or a symbol. This book leaves little doubt of his theological scepticism:

As you know, I distinguish sharply between the Christian revelation and the theology that rationalizes and explains it. The former was the work of the inspired era of origins. It is prophetic in form and sense; it involves an idealized reading of history past and to come. It is, so to say, an inspired construction of things in the interests of religion; a work of inspired imagination, not of reflection and reasoning. . . . Of that symbolic and imaginative construction the Virgin Birth is an integral part. It is an element of a complete expression. But it must not be broken off and interpreted alone. All the elements conspire to express one thing—the Kingdom of God.

It is not easy to see how, after such a breach with historic Christianity, Tyrrell can have believed that he had a place in the historic Church. A scientific, psychological examination of the religious fact in man's history did not, in his hands, confirm but overthrow the creed of the Church, and it was an error of judgment not voluntarily to retire (as he foresaw he would one day have to do) to that position in the porch which he called being "a Catholic *spe* not *re*." His figure does not recover its full graciousness and pathos until we make the dichotomy from which he shrank. As a rebel (and a somewhat reckless and inconsiderate rebel) within an ancient institution, pledged to defend all that he attacked, he sounds a strident and disconcerting note. We must try to see him as the priest of his own religion.

Tyrrell had a more fond and sensitive understanding of the spirit of Christ than any other writer known to us who has tried to interpret it. To say that he understood the doctrines of Christ better than his opponents would be to beg enormous questions. To say that in his own life he reproduced the ideal set by his Master more closely than any other disciple would be to say what could not be true of so pugnacious and restless a temperament. What gives a unity to his work from his first book to his last, from the bold Ultramontanist of his opening years to the theological anarchism of his decline, is his resolve to apply every system in which in turn he believed only in the spirit of Christ—the spirit of generosity, the spirit of honour, the spirit of delicacy and the spirit of mercy. Take the group

of letters in this book called "Change of Faith." They are occupied with advice to a lady meditating conversion to Rome, and when they have been read, the meaning of the *logion*, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte," is illuminated to its furthest recesses. Yet it has not actually been quoted once in the series.

Just here, it seems to us, is the value of Tyrrell for our time. The orthodox who believe more than he could and agnostics who believe less can alike find support, not in the teacher of Modernism, but in the interpreter of Christ. Many for whom Christ is no longer the Prophet for all times and crises feel that he is, at any rate, a teacher singularly needed in an age of blood and iron like the present. So long as there are Christians of even this simple type, Tyrrell will be read, because of his instinct for the things of Christ. His cruel ironies and his flaming resentments, his rash speculations and his tottering syntheses may all be buried in his grave. His message is more direct and universal, and of it, too, it may be said: "All the elements conspire to express one thing—the Kingdom of God."

A CAPTIVE AT CARLSRUHE. By Joseph Lee. (Lane. 7s. 6d. net.)—**BEHIND BOCHE BARS.** By Ernest Warburton. (Lane. 6s. 6d. net.)—Mr. Lee, who wrote several excellent ballads of the war, relates with much picturesqueness and good humour, not unaided by his skill with the pencil, the events of his captivity. We can laugh with him at the "Brigadier-General crossing the square carefully balancing a mess of pork and beans upon a plate," and the German interpreter who wanted "East Lynne," by—Carlyle; we can rejoice with him over the activities of the dramatic and debating societies; and yet (for Mr. Lee has more in him than the mere art of narrative) the effect of the book is saddening indeed. It is not, perhaps, such matters as hunger, or the misery of the caged bird, or the bombing and slaughter of women and children, which move the deepest emotions. It is rather the kindness of Maier, the old camp orderly, with his old-wives' anxiety to point out all objects of interest; or Lieutenant Kruggel's apology for the insolence of "a bald-headed elderly gentleman, standing behind the gate of a villa garden"; or the memorial service, after the Armistice—"I could only see one living German soldier, but who shall say the spirits of how many dead were there?"

Mr. Warburton was unfortunate enough to be selected for a raid in 1916, and, more so, to be hit by a bomb and taken prisoner. Among his various camps was Holzminden, where he found Herr Niemeyer, so brilliantly described in a recent book by Mr. H. G. Durnford. Here are one or two additional reminiscences, and corroborations: "I've got a dinner keeping hot for you, gentlemen, such as you wouldn't get in Regent Street or Piccadilly," is a formula which no one could have forgotten. One of Mr. Warburton's best stories is that of the escaped officer who tried to reach the Dutch border on a goods train, but was disturbed. He at once claimed that he was a Belgian workman, sent to Düsseldorf in 1914, and now anxious to see his dying mother in Belgium. The guard sympathized, and agreed to put him down at Liège. The train, however, stopped in a brilliantly lighted goods yard, and an inspector looked in. Next day the runaway, still the Belgian workman, appeared before the magistrate on the charge of travelling without a pass. He lied with such skill that the court expressed sorrow at sending him to prison for fourteen days. This, however, implied inquiries; and he announced that he was an escaped British officer. "Sensation in court. They nearly fell on his neck, they were so delighted at having captured an escaping officer prisoner"; and completed the episode with offerings of sandwiches and coffee.

THE MIDDLE WEST AGAIN

THE GREAT ACCIDENT. By Ben Ames Williams. (Mills & Boon. 8s. 6d. net.)

WE noticed last week, in a review of Miss Willa Cather's short stories, the influence of the great Middle West upon American literature of to-day. Those stories were typical of the revolt that is going on there against the ugliness of material existence and the trammels of a merely economic life. There is none of this revolt in Mr. Ben Ames Williams's able novel "The Great Accident." The author has seen that the best way of escaping from material existence is not to go wildly galloping after the "bright Medusa"—to use Miss Cather's phrase—but to turn the ray of art directly upon it. How much colour it will then take on is astonishing.

Mr. Williams's art is not one of the most powerful illuminants, though he knows how to construct a story: the little town of Hardiston in Ohio, where the whole of the action is laid, will not become immortal by this novel. Nevertheless, this town and its inhabitants stand out with remarkable clearness, and it is well worth while for English men and women to read of it. They will see for themselves how different is their country from that huge one which speaks the same language.

Hardiston—technically a city, since just over five thousand souls inhabit it—has a past that goes back to the Indians and beyond. When the primitive salt industry had failed, a tremendous activity in coal- and iron-mining had set in. Twenty years ago the seams were exhausted. Smelting with imported ore still goes on, but in these days Hardiston has apparently fallen asleep. The brickyard is gone, the big hotel is closed, the dry-goods store has shrunk from three storeys to one, the car tracks have been ripped up, and there are only two trains a day. But Hardiston is rich, cheerful and comfortable: it is a friendly town, and it loves politics ardently. "Politics," says Mr. Williams, "corrupt it how you will, is the art of making and keeping friends." This is a tale of local politics: it shows incidentally that when it comes to political rivalry friendliness is, as they say, "cut out."

The intrigue is of a simple kind, and with its bare bones there is no need to trouble. A very young man, half way to the devil through drink, is by a trick of the astute old Congressman, Amos Caretall, elected Mayor when his father was standing against Caretall's candidate. The elder Chase is furious, and drives young Winthrop (Wint for short) out of his house. But the boy, out of pure contrariness, makes good, takes up the duties in earnest, and sets out to enforce the legal prohibition of drink, the sale of which has been hitherto connived at. The liquor interest sticks at nothing to discredit him, but he downs them all like a hero, and passes from our sight in the midst of an ovation. The young man who makes good is common enough in literature, and the psychology of Wint Chase is too crude to distinguish him from all the other young men of the kind who meet us every month in popular magazines. But the inhabitants of Hardiston and their everyday life are full of interest. Here, for one thing, we have democracy as it has never, so far, been possible in England, even in remote villages. It would seem that there are really no class distinctions, in spite of differences of wealth. Mrs. Chase, for instance, gets in a hired girl, but that hired girl has been Wint's schoolmate at the public school. She cooks for him and his family, but he calls her Hetty and she calls him Wint. The Congressman, whose astuteness under a homely, simple exterior *à la* Lincoln is, perhaps, a little overdrawn, lives very simply in the city which returns him. Only one old woman waits on him and his daughter; he likes to sit in slippers smoking plug tobacco in a filthy pipe. Anybody can come to see him on equal terms, whether it be rich Mr. Chase or the

unattractive V. R. Kite who runs the liquor trade. Everybody is equal, and everyone knows everybody else, so that politics can be carried on by word of mouth. Amos Caretall plays his trick on old Chase simply by telling him that he will vote for a Chase, and, by giving the word to a few henchmen, inducing the whole of his side to vote for Winthrop.

This old-fashioned and refreshing simplicity is reflected in the occupations and the institutions of Hardiston. The firebell is sounded by a rope pulled in the entrance hall of the council chamber; and when the marshal, Jim Radabaugh, a tailor at other moments, arrests a misdemeanant, he confines him for the night in a cell behind the stalls of the fire-horses.

There were only one or two places in Hardiston to go to when you did not know where to go. You might go to the Smoke House, and shake dice for a cigar, or drop a nickel in the slot machine to see how your luck was running. Or you might drop in at the Post Office in the idle hope that a special train had come along with a letter for you since the last regular mail was sorted into the boxes. Or you might stop at one of the newspaper offices. The editors were always willing to talk, and there were usually two or three others there before you.

Mr. Williams, with a good-humoured smile, does not conceal the fact that Hardiston's gaiety was internal rather than external:

Matters in Hardiston went on much as they had in the past. Men rose, did their day's work, ate, and went to bed again. Women likewise. The annual Chautauqua lecture course began and was finished; Number Four theatrical companies came to town with Broadway attractions, played one-night stands, and departed as they had come. The moving-picture houses had new films every day, and the same audiences day after day. The dramatic teacher in the high school organized a pageant, and it was presented to the eyes of admiring parents in the Rink. The high school played basket ball, the women played bridge, the men played poker of a night. Now and then the Masons or the Knights of Pythias gave a dance. The preachers preached sermons in which they tried to prove there was nothing the matter with the churches. The schools developed their annual scandal over the discharge of a school-teacher. . . .

There is something masterly in passages of this kind: Mr. Williams has so firm a grip of his environment that he has no need to indulge in a wealth of minute and unnecessary detail. In winter and summer Hardiston lives before us with its two trains a day, its furnaces, its familiar provincialism, and its self-satisfaction. None of its inhabitants—Caretall, Chase, B. B. Beecham (the editor), Gergue (the attorney), or V. R. Kite—show the least sign of wishing to be anything else than what they are at Hardiston. In this country we are apt to think Mr. Arnold Bennett's portraiture of the Five Towns something quite remarkable in the style of Dutch interiors; but, compared with Hardiston, Hanbridge and Knipe are blown through by all the winds of the world. In this small country every little village and country town is bound by innumerable fibres to the greater social cosmos. Nothing can undo the work of Domesday Book, for one thing; and, for another, we are all so close together. Hardiston—and there must be thousands of Hardistons—seems to stew contentedly in its own juice, satisfied with its own little excitements, and hardly aware, for most of its days, of the rest of the United States, certainly not of New York, emphatically not of Boston. One makes the acquaintance of Hardiston without protest and without ridicule. The Middle West alone is entitled either to protest or to laugh at its own peculiarities, and it has begun to do both. The best that we can do is to embrace opportunities like this of learning something about it. They are extremely entertaining.

O. W.

MR. C. B. WHEELER's edition of "Anne of Geierstein" (Clarendon Press, 3s. 6d. net) is excellent in both *apparatus criticus* and in externals. Scott's own introduction and notes are given, together with those of the editor; there are maps and many congenial illustrations.

CHERCHEZ LA FEMME

OUR WOMEN: CHAPTERS ON THE SEX-DISCORD. By Arnold Bennett. (Cassell. 7s. 6d. net.)

MR. BENNETT is the foreman of literature. It is to him an exact craft: his standard of style is a standard of grammar. Even before the war he believed in the force of numbers, but, being a master of modern strategy, he did occasionally lead his rabble of details to a triumphant victory. Can it be that years of trench warfare have undermined his military genius? Have those occasional dramatic sorties proved too expensive? We do not know. Groping for a cause, we weep for the effect.

Inevitably for Mr. Bennett woman is an exact science. True, he apologizes for the fanciful whimsies with which he is going to delight us, extolling inaccuracy with a pride which shows that to him this modest word means imaginative intuition. But then, with a simplicity unequalled since Kingsley put cleverness and goodness into opposite camps, he arranges his psychological thesis in the terms of a problem of arithmetic, and, putting reason and strength on one side, sentiment and weakness on the other, he gives a casting vote.

"The subject [women] seems to be a very forcing bed of wit and humour," we are told at the beginning. But our spirits flag a little as we watch a long procession of semi-obvious, semi-cheap semi-truths unrolled before us, while words like "stylish" and "undies" (used only in all women's papers and some men's books) creep into Mr. Bennett's vocabulary.

But our first serious shock comes when we are assured that a woman who has piloted an aeroplane all day will not wish to take a man's arm to cross the street at night. Evidently to Mr. Bennett an arm is an arm. We re-read the sentence. Yes, "woman" is the word. For a moment we feel bewildered, but our mind clears when we learn that the triumph of feminism will kill the irrational and the gross, and prevent people from talking nonsense when they are in love! Further, we are provided with the "Open, Sesame," to this ravishing world—the economic independence of women. Now, with all due deference to Mr. Bennett, we must point out that in our opinion the ambition of seventy women out of a hundred (at the lowest estimate) is not independence, but dependence, and that in their daydreams the unhappily married see themselves dependent on another man more often than they see themselves dependent on a typewriter. Even in this enlightened age of substitutes the machine cannot fulfil all the functions of the eternal masculine.

We have always believed that most men and all women preferred men to women; and when Mr. Bennett is on the subject of the superiority of his sex, we agree heartily with him, though we think that when he asserts that there are no women novelists to-day of worldwide reputation, he is overlooking Selma Lagerlöf and Edith Wharton. Also, we resent the appearance of Jane Austen in brackets.

But by this time we frankly confess to being thoroughly out of temper. Why should Mr. Bennett help himself to questions we would never put, explain away a shockedness we could never feel, and use our inane and imaginary comments as stepping-stones on his journey? ("Numbers of people will exclaim," "I seem to hear in the air the dissatisfied query," "You may say," and so on.) Frankly, when Mr. Bennett is discussing women we insist on being left out of it. Our pride in our own sex and our respect for his evaporated when Jack and Jill talked of "kids" and "chrysanthus."

This whole book might be a jigsaw puzzle called "Cherchez la Femme." All the pieces are there—mothers, wives, parasites, and professionals—every variety of female.

But put them together in every and any conceivable way, the eternal feminine will not emerge. Resolutely Mr. Bennett rushes from the inquest on femininity to the accouchement of feminism, and all that we ask ourselves is: "Has he ever known a woman?" EL. B.

OUR LIBRARY TABLE

THE STORY OF MY LIFE. By the late Colonel Philip Meadows Taylor. New Edition, with Introduction and Notes by Henry Bruce. (Oxford University Press. 16s. net.)—The Oxford Press continues its beneficent work of revealing to a later generation the classics of Anglo-Indian literature. The new edition of Tod's "Annals" has been followed by Meadows Taylor's autobiography. This delightful work is rich in all the qualities which give to this strange enclave of English literature its peculiar charm; of these the chief is that intensely English capacity for feeling an Indian patriotism. We are at times almost persuaded that some of the servants of John Company, who spent forty or fifty years from boyhood in practically uninterrupted residence in the territory they administered, were the only true patriots that India has ever produced. It is certainly true that no born Mahratta would ever have had the dignity and well-being of the now forgotten little State of Shorapur more deeply at heart than Meadows Taylor. His simple, unassuming record of his career from a boy-ensign in the Nizam's contingent to the administration, first of Shorapur and then of Sholapur, though it displays many of the literary qualities which have made "The Confessions of a Thug" a minor classic, is notable chiefly for the spirit of courtesy, sympathy, and self-sacrifice in the conduct of Indian affairs with which it is animated. Meadows Taylor's services were never adequately recognized; he was not one of the "covenanted" service; but he was undoubtedly one of the great Indian officials. He behaved as a gentleman in a country of gentlemen, largely because he had patience and devotion enough to learn how an Indian gentleman should behave.

THE OPEN VISION: A STUDY OF PSYCHIC PHENOMENA. By Horatio W. Dresser, Ph.D. (Harrap. 7s. 6d. net.)—Mr. Dresser has more discrimination than the average writer upon psychic phenomena; but if his attitude to psychic research is deservedly critical, his reliance upon "inner perception" is not to be justified by any of his arguments. Faced with the question, How is the validity of "inner guidance" to be known? he replies, in effect, Partly by the emotion it gives one, and partly by experience. But in a degenerate an inner imperative which was bad would arouse a reassuring emotion, and experience would be just as lying, for it has been demonstrated that degenerates desire unpleasant experiences—for instance, to wear filthy clothes. The book is spoiled by the author's insufficient treatment of this problem. His subsequent assumptions that we are on the eve of a new age, and that the faculty of vision is just now unfolding itself, to become full-blown the day after to-morrow, are, in the absence of evidence, merely idle.

PEETICKAY: AN ESSAY TOWARDS THE ABOLITION OF SPELLING. By Wilfrid Perrett. (Cambridge, Heffer. 6s. net.)—Even the eagerest advocate of Simplified Spelling is coming to admit that the present system will never be overthrown by a sudden revolution. The only hope is that a new notation may be quietly introduced side by side with the old, until, when we are equally familiar with both, we can choose between them on their merits. If the new system is used at first for a distinct purpose, the stratagem is more likely to work. This is what Dr. Perrett suggests. He is a teacher of phonetics, and his system would be used primarily to show the exact sounds of

words. Eventually, when a generation of children have learned how easy it is to write down their own or any language in Peetickay, and realized what years they have wasted in learning to misspell by the ABC, they will doubtless declare a general strike against the system under which the diphthong *i* is now spelt in about twenty different ways.

Peetickay is easy to learn, easier than the notation we have to master every time we buy a new pronouncing dictionary. The consonants are those we are familiar with in print, but their values are fixed; the vowels are expressed in a graphic form that is much simpler than the simplest way of writing music. A line straight up means *ee*, the horizontal is *ah*, the straight-down line is *oo*. Bisect or trisect the angles, and you get the series of vowels in "Pa may we all go too." This is Dr. Perrett's master-stroke—no play upon words is intended. Short vowels are indicated by short lines, diphthongs by bent ones. The system is both graphic and scientific. One could indeed read Peetickay without the vowels. When we now abbreviate for our own convenience we naturally write down the consonants and omit the vowels. Pitman's shorthand consists of strokes standing for consonants, with or without the vowel-dots. It is like pointed or unpointed Hebrew. In fact, there is an obviousness about "Peetickay" that makes one think of "Americkay" and wonder why it was not discovered before. But that is a characteristic of all great inventions.

MEN AND TANKS. By J. C. Macintosh. (Lane. 5s. net.)—When, during the first battle of the Somme, the rumour ran up the line that certain landships had appeared in action, which forced their way through or over houses and merely laid tall trees low and went on, we marvelled. Later on, we saw these irresistible forces half-submerged in Ypres mud, or derelict before Cambrai. Illusions may still remain, but if anyone still thinks of the impenetrable and all-conquering creations of 1916 rumour, let him turn to Mr. Macintosh's description of life in a tank under field-gun fire. A direct hit on a faulty pillbox—we speak from experience—has its disadvantages; a direct hit on a tank is somewhat worse. Mr. Macintosh preserves a modest and impressive tone, with but slight lapses, throughout his record of events not to be imagined. His book, if read, will give war-meddlers furiously to think.

PSYCHOLOGY AND MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE. By John Howley, Professor of Philosophy, Galway. (Kegan Paul. 10s. 6d. net.)—Perhaps the most interesting chapters in this book are those on "The Psychology of a Revival" and "Mystical Experience and Quietism." Professor Howley rejects William James' diagnosis of "conversion" as the outburst of a desire which has been "elaborated in the subconscious," and substitutes for it one much simpler and, on the whole, more intelligible. Two factors, he says, are in themselves sufficient to bring about the state called "conversion": the dynamic force of an idea suddenly presented in a startling form, and "the existence in states of consciousness of centres of instability." The instances which he adduces, taken mostly from Wales, the birthplace of revivals, establish, we think, his thesis. On the subject of "Mystical Experience and Quietism" he is less stimulating, relying upon the authority of theologians and orthodox mystics more than upon his own judgment. His conclusion is that the mystical state is one of "passive attention"—a phrase about which volumes could be written—while Quietism, even as practised by its greatest saint, Madame Guyon, attains only passivity, the equally essential element, "attention," being absent. The author in this section is not so much subtle as perfectly at home among the subtleties of the doctors.

NOVELS IN BRIEF

THAT dreadful sophistication which attends the reviewer's trade will prevent him from building unwary hopes, doomed to swift disappointment, upon the publishers' announcement that in "Anne Richmond" (Odhams, 8s. 6d. net) Mrs. Alfred Praga "deals with the sex-problem of the day upon most unexpected lines." There is no sort of unexpectedness about Anne Richmond or her proceedings. We have met her type—in fiction—many times already; not an unenviable type, but one for which we must freely confess we have no use whatever. We are quite unable to feel sympathy for a woman only thirty years old, who with five hundred a year, good health and good looks can devise for herself no worthier adventure than that of receiving into her flat at midnight a man whom she has picked up in the street. It is hard to believe the author's assurances that of such stuff the ideal mother is made, and even harder to imagine that this beginning could be crowned by a superlatively happy ending. The sex *motif* is diversified by an engagingly artless strain of Romanist propaganda, and the net result is a story better written and easier to read than the majority of modern novels.

In "Drumsticks" (Melrose, 3s. 6d. net) Mrs. Cheever Meredith has given us a strong dose of sentiment, but we are not prepared to pronounce it, in the circumstances, excessive. Drumsticks, the unwanted daughter of a Pierrot and Columbine, is adopted by a subsequent admirer of her mother, and, thanks to his wife's generosity, finds happiness for the first time in her short life. But all is spoilt by the recrudescence of the actress, who, merely from a jealous whim, drags her child away, to die shortly after. We could wish that this climax had been spared, for Drumsticks is an engaging little creature. The trio of grown persons concerned in these transactions—Sophie the typical courtesan, Charlotte her sober, high-minded rival, and the weak though amiable husband who fluctuates helplessly between them—are all effectively drawn.

"The Dippers," by Ben Travers (Lane, 7s. 6d. net), is a gay little farce, built round a situation which conduces to vulgarity and riskiness, but steering creditably clear of both. A respectable London solicitor, attending a client in the country, arrives at the wrong house, and finds himself mistaken for Hank P. Dipper, a professional American jazz-dancer, who by some chance has failed to keep his appointment. Moved by the entreaties of Dipper's wife, he consents to sustain this character in a grand dual display, intended to entertain the guests of a new peer; and his clumsy efforts being taken for intentional caricature, he scores an amazing success. The conversational absurdities of the negro "coon" band, and of would-be connoisseurs among the spectators, are diverting, as is the indignation of the real Hank Dipper, who appears in time to witness what he considers a desecration of his art.

In "The Luck of the Mounted" (Lane, 7s. 6d. net) Sergeant Ralph S. Kendall treats a subject after Kipling's own heart with something less than Kiplingesque brilliance. During most of the action, "The Mounted," otherwise the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, are engaged in investigating a murder which the publisher considers "peculiarly baffling," but which, to our mind, is from the first as transparent as daylight. But the incredible difficulties and dangers which these men have to encounter in their task of maintaining order, and the rough vigour of the men themselves, are effectively brought home to us. Outside the force the most striking figure introduced is that of a rancher J.P. whose ideas of crime and justice prove to be somewhat unusual. The two gentlemen rankers converted into sworn brothers by a pugilistic duel seem faintly reminiscent of Private Ortheris.

True to its title, "Elmiria Wakes," by Grace Stebbing (Jarrolds, 7s. 6d. net), is a variation on the theme of the sleeping beauty. Elmiria has been brought up by a crank of a parent on rather the same lines as John Stuart Mill: the result being the development, not of genius, but of something more nearly approaching imbecility. She is, however, good-looking and good-natured, and wins for herself friends in various social spheres, under whose fostering care she becomes normal, and, as in duty bound, marries. It is not a likely story, and the manner of telling makes it difficult to follow.

LITERARY GOSSIP

IN an Essex workhouse has just died Joshua Hatton, brother of the late editor of *The People*, and himself not only a journalist of great experience and mark, but also a poet who had the kindly opinion of Tennyson. It was Hatton to whose misfortunes attention was drawn in this column some months since. Hatton was seventy years old, and at the time of his death was still hoping that the materials for his fifth volume of verse would see the light. There may be work of value among them: we trust that at least they may be carefully examined by competent hands.

It is a curious age that finds so many minds living a century or centuries ago. Research is in the air. Rumours are abroad of new Shelley discoveries of considerable importance; of supposed Crashaw discoveries; of a forthcoming edition of Vaughan with a long roll of new poems by him. Even so, we think that the businesslike action of the Essex Archaeological Society might be generally imitated with satisfactory results. This Society has circulated an appeal for documents of historic interest, emphasizing the probable existence of such relics unknown to their owners, and clearly indicating the types specially sought.

Commenting on the change in the *London Mercury* from unsigned to signed reviews, the *Villager* of New York observes, "We wish that no book, paper, poem or story published during, let us say, the next ten years, would be allowed to bear the name of its author." The tyranny of names has certainly not declined of late; but the *Villager* is a little rash. The outlook for literature is not so bright that authors can afford to shed what advantage their past triumphs have secured them.

It is customary with newspapers to announce by way of inducement their large number of pages. *The News Summary*, which has just made its appearance, claims the opposite virtue of being a single sheet. It excludes advertisements, and is more or less of an index to the day's news and the journals. In another respect *The News Summary* is unusual, for it is supplied to subscribers only.

"Sell's World Press" for 1921 takes its place of respect and usefulness on the shelves. Of the original articles, a brief note by Mr. H. W. Massingham on "The Independent Editor" is especially interesting: "Suppose a fresh occasion for war were to arise, more debatable than the last. Could we hope for a reasonable discussion of it? Yes, when half-a-dozen London editors will say, 'To-morrow's paper is going to be the worst seller of the year, but there shall be no war.'"

The sale at Newstead Abbey on the 10th has its attraction for others besides the bibliophiles. With the library of 7,000 volumes, Napoleon's copy of Ovid will change hands. It does not appear to contain annotations by him, but still we are curious to see what price will be reached. The furniture to be sold includes Byron's bookcases and other articles belonging to him.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

MESSRS. SOTHEBY'S sale of books on the 17th, 18th and 19th inst. contains a number of valuable books and manuscripts from the libraries of Christ's Hospital, Lady Amherst, Col. Wyndham, and others. The books from Christ's Hospital consist in the main of a number of early mathematical and astronomical works, of no value from the pedagogical point of view, but of considerable interest to scholars. Among them are the first edition of Eliot's Indian Bible, one of the twenty copies sent over to England for presentation; a rare tract by Roger Bacon; Eden's "Art of Navigation," 1584; Gilbert "de Magnete," Hakluyt, Higden's "Polychronicon," by Wynkyn de Worde, 1495, and Purchas. The first day's sale has some Americana of considerable interest; a member of rare incunabula, such as three 1475 works of Æneas Sylvius, and a Cremona-printed Petrarch; and many English works of importance—first editions of Aphra Behn, "Don Quixote" (in English), Donne, Chapman, Lovelace's "Lucasta," "Tristram Shandy," and Waller.

Col. Wyndham's collection is notable for the number of plays by Massinger, Shirley, and other seventeenth-century writers which it contains. Lady Amherst's collection consists of manuscripts, rare incunabula, Reformation books, and a few bindings. The manuscripts include three of the "Imitation," three Oriental, and Horæ (Sarum, Flemish and Dutch), all illuminated. Among the incunabula are the excessively rare Oxford "Ethics" of Aristotle of 1479, which should arouse keen competition; the Fust & Schoeffer Cicero of 1465, the first classic ever printed; the Wynkyn de Worde Bartholomew Anglicus of 1495, the "Vitas Patrum" of the same year and printer, the 1482 Hyginus, and the 1494 à Kempis. The Reformation books are notable for a Tyndale's Pentateuch printed at Antwerp in 1530-31, some pages in facsimile, but of the greatest rarity; a number of Bibles, beginning with Coverdale's 1535 edition; a first edition of the Brandenburg Liturgy of 1533, most probably unique; Pomerane's Compendious Letter (1536), probably the only copy existing; a number of Primers (1535, 1546), a 1536 Tyndale New Testament, and Tracie's "Supplication." Three interesting Spanish Chronicles are to be sold in one lot. There are a fine Hakluyt, a very rare Sarum Missal, 1515, a good collection of historical Prayer Books, and a volume with the stamp and name of Queen Elizabeth.

The rest of the sale offers some bindings, a few rare English books, and an interesting collection of tracts relating to Ireland, one of which gives the true author of the 1690 Journal of William III.'s Campaign in Ireland, Samuel Mullenau, M.D., not William Molyneux. Another curiosity is the set of road maps prepared for the use of Marie Antoinette when entering France to marry the Dauphin. A third and fourth folio Shakespeare finish the sale.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

THE Christmas and New Year's performances in 1820-21, at the principal theatres, began, as usual, on December 26. At Drury Lane the tragedy of "Jane Shore" was followed by a stupid pantomime called "The North-West Passage; or, Harlequin Esquimaux." The tragedy was "rendered peculiarly heavy . . . by the incessant growling of the galleries." At Covent Garden there was a first-rate pantomime, "Friar Bacon and his Brazen Head," in which the famous Joseph Grimaldi and his son Joseph S. Grimaldi had conspicuous parts.

An event of great importance in the theatrical world was the production on January 9, 1821, at Covent Garden Theatre, of "Barry Cornwall's" "Mirandola." Immense audiences, night after night, greeted this tragedy with the utmost enthusiasm; and the notices of the book, which appeared almost immediately in the various literary periodicals, were virtually unanimous in laudation of Procter's work. A wretched contrast was afforded at Drury Lane Theatre on January 8, when "Montalto," a tragedy said to be by "Mr. Soane" (presumably George Soane, son of the architect), was performed for the first time—only to linger out a four nights' "miserable existence." It was then withdrawn, together with the Drury Lane pantomime, which also was a complete failure.

Particular interest was felt, at the period with which we are concerned, in Arctic and Antarctic exploration; and the accounts of Ross and Parry's expeditions to the North, as well as of William Smith's discoveries in the South, were widely and eagerly read.

Restriction of space has prevented us from sooner referring to the death, on November 11, 1820, of William Hayley, the author of "The Triumphs of Temper," and biographer of Cowper, Milton, and Romney; to Hazlitt's admirable essay "On the Pleasures of Painting" in the *London Magazine* for December, 1820; to W. H. Parry's notable character-sketch of Macready in the *Literary Gazette* of November 11, 1820; to the review of Cornelius Webb's "Sonnets" in the *Literary Chronicle* of December 16, 1820; to a piquant description (in the *New Times* for December 28, 1820) of the *Edinburgh Review* as a "periodical political pamphlet" which "assumes the garb of a literary work"; and, lastly, to the notice, in the *Literary Gazette* for the penultimate day of 1820, of Charles Lloyd's "Desultory Thoughts in London," and other poems—the "errors" in which, the reviewer is pleased to declare, are rather "of style than of heart, rather of bad taste than of a corrupt mind."

Science SOUND

THE Christmas lectures, for a juvenile auditory, are invariably amongst the most attractive discourses delivered at the Royal Institution. They differ from most of the R.I. lectures in that the lecturer usually makes a point of calling attention to the more picturesque aspects of his subject, illustrating his remarks by the most spectacular experiments he can devise, and maintaining the whole discussion at a purely popular level. For these reasons not a few adults welcome them as the most instructive, because the most intelligible, lectures of the year. Not that the title "Children's Lectures" is misleading, that they are really intended for our grown-up, but weaker, brethren—indeed, we have seen a photograph of an indisputably juvenile audience; we merely suggest that the most learned of us take pleasure, now and then, in listening to a lecturer who takes nothing for granted.

The present volume* is an admirable example of the peculiarly fascinating quality such lectures may have. The science of sound is the Cinderella of Physics, but has no prospect of ever turning into a princess. Except in its mathematical developments, where it merely merges into dynamics, it is not of great scientific importance, and permits of no such grandiose developments as are possible in Heat, Light, and Electromagnetism. It does not lead us to the intimate structure of matter, on the one hand, nor, on the other, into inter-stellar space. It is, in a sense, a body of local phenomena, bounded by the little layer of air that encloses this planet. Its study has been helpful—to a very limited extent—in the design of musical instruments and, recently, in war. Various little oddities have been explained by it—the whispering gallery at St. Paul's, the singing of a kettle, and so on. But it is not one of the major sciences; it cannot be said that it plays a part in science analogous to that of music in the arts.

It is inevitable, therefore, that Professor Bragg's lectures should consist in the exposition of more or less disconnected phenomena. The way in which he has grouped the phenomena rather emphasizes their lack of any natural connection. We have "Sound in Music," "Sounds of the Town," "Sounds of the Country," and so on. The treatment does pay attention, nevertheless, to logical development, and it is extremely readable. But we think we shall secure more readers for Professor Bragg's little book by mentioning some of the more odd and less well-known phenomena he describes. Take, for instance, the case of falling drops of water. Everybody has listened to that monotonous drip, drip, drip. A poet has recently called attention to the irregularity of the rhythm; the mind, he asserts, which listens all night to water dripping into a tank is continually held in suspense; the subtle variations in the time can never be anticipated. But the poet failed to notice, apparently, that the pitch of the note also varies; yet this fact is much more important, and, at first sight, inexplicable. The late Mr. Worthington investigated the subject. He arranged an ingenious apparatus whereby instantaneous photographs of the drop at any stage of its fall could be secured. These photographs show very clearly the form of the splash thrown up as the drop enters the water, and also the subsequent emergence of a column of water bearing the drop on its summit. The falling drop contained lampblack, and the tank contained a mixture of milk and water, so that the

movements of the drop could easily be traced. By taking photographs below the surface the shape and dimensions of the cavity formed behind the falling drop were obtained. The note we hear is the resonant note of this cavity, probably given out when the cavity has closed over at the top and burst again. The variations in pitch are the result of changes in the form of the cavity; a falling drop oscillates between a flattened and a pointed shape, and the shape of the cavity depends largely on the shape of the striking drop. Plasticine models of the cavities can be made to give out the same notes by blowing across the top. If the water is not deep enough to permit of the formation of the cavity there is no noise. The noise from a murmuring brook is of the same nature and origin. We do not know whether our attentive nature poets have observed that the gentle splashing sound comes only from places where the water is white. Little air bubbles have been caught up in the water as it comes over some little fall, and the multitude of little noises made by the bursting of these bubbles is the murmur of the brook.

Not only this example, but many others, suggest to us that intending nature poets would find this book of considerable value. The researches of Mr. Wilkinson, the blind naturalist of Leeds, open up a new world of meticulous observation and convincing detail. As Professor Bragg says: "Which of us thinks of the difference in the rustlings of the different trees in the wood, or of the same tree at different times of the year, or of the character of the reflections of sound by fir trees, oaks, and beeches?" The sound of the wind in a wood varies considerably with the nature of the trees. The fine stems of pine-needles, for instance, break the wind into whirls succeeding one another with great frequency, and the sound is high-pitched but soft: broad beech-leaves give quite a different sound. A heavy rain-storm hisses in a pine-wood and roars in a beech-wood. The reasons for these phenomena are very simply explained by Professor Bragg, and we see why, as another example, poplars should rustle more than other trees. The acute Mr. Wilkinson has noticed that the rustle is soft when the leaves are young and tender in the spring, but becomes harsher as the leaves stiffen in the autumn. But, indeed, the whole of this little book is packed with interesting and out-of-the-way observations, and, at the same time, the scientific principles involved are brought out in a clear and connected manner. Even the obstinately "practical" man will have to concede that this charming study has its value when he reads the last chapter, on "Sound in War." When judged by this modern supreme test the science of sound still justifies its existence.

S.

NATURAL HISTORY STUDIES. By J. Arthur Thomson, LL.D. (Melrose. 7s. 6d. net.)—This is a collection of forty short essays, ten to each of the seasons. Charming, fanciful, if sometimes sentimental, they are concerned with such topics as "The Deep Sea" (its inhabitants particularly), "A Peculiar People" (the Penguins), "Guests and Slaves of Ants." One feels that the author humanizes his insects and animals; but that is in reality no objection in a book of this kind, written more to interest and amuse than to instruct. The more human, indeed, the animals are made the more amusing they are. And in being amused we cannot help noting in what a high degree the author possesses the gift of characterization. His penguins are sketched with a few clean strokes; they are at once realistic portraits and imaginative creations. Many a character in fiction is less exact and vivid. The occasional sentimentality is the only thing which mars one's enjoyment of the book. The descriptive essays on the seasons are in this respect the worst, and the account of deep-sea life, penguins, and ants the best amongst the studies in Professor Thomson's book.

* "The World of Sound." By Professor Sir William Bragg. (Bell & Sons. 6s. net.)

SOCIETIES

ARISTOTELIAN.—Dec. 6.—Prof. T. P. Nunn, Hon. Treasurer, in the chair.—Prof. W. P. Montague read a paper on "Variation, Heredity and Consciousness: a Mechanist Answer to the Vitalist Challenge."

Bergson in France, McDougall in England, and Driesch in Germany have attacked mechanistic philosophy not only as inadequate to cope with the known facts of phylogeny, ontogeny, and consciousness, but as definitely in conflict with them. In reply it was attempted to show that in regard to each of the three sets of problems it is possible to point out a solution, statable in mechanistic terms, which at the same time provides full satisfaction to the demand of the vitalist that the purposive and psychic characters of life shall not be reduced to an epiphenomenal status of dependence upon blind processes, but recognized as genuinely operative factors in the economy of nature. In regard to the origin of useful variations, their rise in the germ-plasm with greater frequency than is explicable on recognizable mechanistic principles may be explained by the conception of biological vectors. According to this conception the unpurposed yet purposeful products of teleogenesis, not only in the germ-plasm, but in the brain when occupied with creative imagination, are results of a system of protoplasmic stresses.

The problem of the manifold of hereditary determinants in the minute germ-cell may be met by conceiving the germ as a system of super-forces or superimposed stresses. These, which were compared to superposed twists in a rope, were the embodiment of a manifold of invisible intensive determinants equal in richness, it was claimed, to the serial events of the germ's ancestral past, and capable of unfolding and reproducing its own pattern by a kind of induction through the serial stages of embryonic growth. The more difficult problem of explaining mind in physical terms was met by the suggestion that the structure of conscious life is analogous to the structure of life in general and capable of being explained in the same way, except that the system of cerebral super-forces in which the past is stored up in the present is composed of traces of potential energy acquired by the brain through the transformation of the kinetic energies of sensory nerve currents. For a physical interpretation of the essentially specific and quantitative nature of mental elements a new category, "Anergy," was suggested, to stand for the form of durational being produced whenever the energy of motion is transformed into the invisible phase we call potential.

FOLK-LORE.—Dec. 15.—Miss Alice Werner read a paper entitled "Some Notes on Zulu Religious Ideas," based on certain unpublished MSS. of Dr. Callaway.

The MSS. deal largely with native doctors and with the custom of *Hlonipa*. A doctor usually begins his career by a serious illness, during which he is treated by one of the established practitioners, who diagnoses the case as one of possession by spirits, and directs the patient how to use the spirits to his best advantage. A beast is probably killed, and the man is put through an initiation ceremony of which few details are known. The *tabu* is mainly concerned with family relations. A man's "great name" (that given him at birth by his father) must not be lightly mentioned by his mother, his wife, his sons or his daughters, nor must children call their mother by her name. Certain rules of conduct are laid down for a woman towards her father-in-law. She must not enter the recess in the hut where he sleeps, and must get out of his way if they meet on the road. The father-in-law must on his side observe certain regulations. He must not call his daughter-in-law by the name of her childhood and must be properly dressed in her presence. It is accounted a great shame to a man, only to be atoned for by a substantial fine, for a daughter-in-law to show, by taking off her headband and laying it on the ground, that he has forfeited all respect. Miss Werner dealt also with the divine or semi-divine names *Ulixo* and *Qamata*. Mr. Gumedé, a Natal Zulu, contributed to the discussion.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

- Fri. 7. Royal Geographical (Æolian Hall), 3.30.—"Life on the Gilgit Frontier," Lieut.-Col. C. Smith. (Christmas Lecture.)
 Philological, 8.—"Tonetics," Prof. Douglas H. Beach.
 Sat. 8. Royal Institution, 3.—"The Conquest of the Land," Prof. J. A. Thomson. (Christmas Lecture.)
 Mon. 10. Surveyors' Institution, 8.—"The Streets of London before the Great Fire," Mr. W. W. Jenkinson.
 Tues. 11. Royal Institution, 3.—"The Mastery of the Air," Prof. J. A. Thomson. (Christmas Lecture.)
 Royal Anthropological Institute, 8.15.—"The Older Palæolithic Age in Egypt," Dr. C. G. Seligman.
 Wed. 12. School of Oriental Studies, Finsbury Circus, noon.—"Africa in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," Lecture I., Miss Alice Werner.
 School of Oriental Studies, 5.—"Ramayan, the Great Sanskrit Epic," Mr. S. G. Kanhere.

Wed. 12. Society of Arts, 8.—"Industrial Fatigue," Dr. C. S. Myers.
 Thurs. 13. School of Oriental Studies, 5.—"The Buddhist Temples of Korea," Miss Hilda C. Bowser.

Fine Arts

HUBERT VAN EYCK AND DIERICK BOUTS

THE panels of the Hubert and Jan Van Eyck polyptych and the shutters to Dierick Bouts' altarpiece, returned to Ghent and Louvain respectively under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, have been on exhibition recently in the Brussels Museum. For the purpose of the exhibition the director borrowed the central panels of the polyptych from Ghent Cathedral and the central panel of the "Last Supper" from the church of St. Pierre at Louvain, and the Brussels public has thus been enabled to see the original works reconstituted in a gallery which houses permanently a number of the finest works by Flemish primitives.

The reconstituted Van Eyck polyptych makes an undeniably impressive appeal. The great age of the work commands in itself attention and respect. Then there is the glamour resulting from the tradition—which there is no real reason to doubt—that we have in this polyptych the earliest oil painting of importance, and there is the glamour also of its singularly adventurous history. As far as can be at present ascertained this history appears to be somewhat as follows.

Hubert Van Eyck was commissioned to execute the work for Saint-Bavon (then Saint-Jean) by one Judocus Vyd in 1420. Hubert died in 1426, and it was finished by his brother Jan, and inaugurated on May 6, 1432. Hubert's reputation on the strength of it was immense. He was buried in the crypt of Saint-Bavon, and later, when the crypt was destroyed, his bones were scattered, but his right arm (*in een ijzer besloten*) was preserved as a relic.

Internal evidence is all in favour of the supposition that the entire work was planned and (except for the paintings on the outside of the wings) mainly executed by the elder brother, and it is to him therefore that its glory belongs.

The polyptych evidently started its vicissitudes at an early date because it had to be partially restored in 1530, but the nature of its first troubles does not appear to have been identified. In 1566, when there was reason to fear that the cathedral might be looted, the altarpiece was removed, and it was eventually exhibited again in the new cathedral in the following year. In 1578 it was offered to Queen Elizabeth, but its departure was prevented at the last minute; it remained, however, in the Hôtel de Ville for several years, and only returned to Saint-Bavon in 1584. In 1647 a fire broke out in the cathedral, and the altarpiece was again hurriedly removed, but escaped damage. In 1781 Joseph II. was so scandalized by the "Adam" and "Eve" panels that they were taken down and stored in the cathedral offices. In 1794 the French carried off the central panels, which were not sent back until 1815. The next year, however, when the central panels were again in their place, the side panels, "Angels Singing," "Angels playing Instruments," "Pilgrims," "Hermits," "Knights" and "Judges," were offered to and bought by a dealer named Niewenhuys, who paid 1,000 francs apiece for them, and sold them for 100,000 francs to an Englishman resident in Germany, referred to in documents as Solly. This Solly (or should we read "Solly"?) sold the set to the King of Prussia for 400,000 thalers, and it is these panels, of course, which have now returned to Ghent to take their original places, by the other panels, which, incidentally, since 1816, have been once more threatened by fire, once more offered for sale,

and finally hidden from the invaders at the beginning of the war.

It is difficult to estimate the damage which the polyptych has suffered in the course of its peregrinations. Speaking generally, it is all in amazing condition—particularly the panels which come from Germany; and a comparison of these original panels with the copies by Michel Coxcie (executed in the nineteenth century) might be of considerable service to art-critics who imagine that they can appraise a painting without any personal experience of the technique of the craft. For Coxcie's pictures are false to the originals in details of handling which could only have been apparent, when the works were fresh, to professional painters, and it is just these technical details which now cause the copies to appear mere ghosts, while Van Eyck's work retains the greater part of its first vitality.

But in spite of its remarkable preservation it is far from easy to judge the "Altarpiece of the Lamb" on its merits as a work of art. Because in the first place it is almost impossible to think away the mass of associated interest, and in the second because the work is not so much a masterpiece of painting as a magnificent and epoch-making experiment. Hubert Van Eyck was unquestionably greatly inferior to his younger brother as a painter. No one can dispute the technical superiority manifested in Jan's picture in the National Gallery over Hubert's picture in the Cook collection, or, again, the superiority of the Canon van der Paele Madonna in Bruges over the central panel of the present altarpiece. But the extreme veneration which attached to Hubert's memory for centuries after his death was nevertheless justified. For the "Altarpiece of the Lamb" started a new era in the development of human consciousness; it marks the passage from an aristocratic miniature art to the popular art of oil painting. Henceforth pictorial art in Flanders was not to be something shut up in books for the delight of the rich; it was to be a thing exhibited in churches, accessible to the humblest peasant. In the great Ghent polyptych Hubert Van Eyck definitely started Flemish art on the course which it was to pursue for two hundred years, the course which led upwards and outwards from the aristocratic miniature to the democratic easel-pictures of Rubens—a course which was the exact opposite of that taken by Italian art, which went downwards and inwards from popular mural mosaics to the small aristocratic easel-pictures of the early Renaissance.

Everything in Hubert's picture proclaims the miniature origin—the wealth of detail, the glittering ornament, the patient execution, the naïf and formal design, no less than the Gothic religious spirit which pervades the whole work. But at the same time the translation into oil medium with the accompanying increase in scale caused the painter, unconsciously doubtless, to attack problems the eventual solution of which by subsequent Flemish painters constitutes the achievement of Flemish art. The particularization in the heads of "Angels Singing," for instance, points the path to Jan's marvellous portraits; and in the general composition of Hubert's masterpiece there is something which is half way towards the escape from the miniaturist conception of composition which we find later in such important works as the unidentified "Deposition from the Cross" in the Brussels Gallery labelled "School of Dierick Bouts," where a large canvas is approached as an area to be animated by rhythmic arrangements, and "The Virgin among Virgins" labelled "Bruges School" in the same collection, which reveals a similar preoccupation with quite geometrical problems of composition. Linked by these pictures, Hubert's altarpiece joins hands with Quentin Massys's "Legend of St. Anne," where Flemish oil painting definitely abandons the miniature.

R. H. W.

EXHIBITIONS OF THE WEEK

R.W.S. GALLERIES, 5A, PALL MALL EAST.—The New English Art Club.

ELDAR GALLERY, 40, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.—Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings by Eugène Boudin.

THE New English Art Club is the most self-abnegating of societies, and it is really a question whether its generosity to the young has not become a vice. Considerably more than half the exhibitors this time are non-members, and the men who used to be the pillars of the Club confine themselves to black-and-white drawings and water-colours. Unfortunately it cannot be said that the guests have risen to the occasion; the stalwarts will have to reassert themselves next time unless they are willing to see their society lapse into comparative insignificance. Nowadays there are so many different groups that the New English Art Club can no longer be regarded as the rallying-ground of artists who are not satisfied with the Academy, but this is all the more reason why the old members should make a determined effort next year to show what the Club stood for formerly, and what it still stands for as a symbol of accomplishment in English art of the last twenty years. One of the reasons, no doubt, for admitting so many of the younger artists is that there is no room in the galleries of the Royal Water-Colour Society for an exhibition in strength, and a choice had to be made between giving the new men their chance or practically excluding them altogether.

Mr. Augustus John's only contribution comes from that fine series of Galway drawings which he did a year or two ago. Mr. Wilson Steer shows several water-colours in which fleeting effects of light are expressed with masterly economy; and an oil-painting "Rochester" (76), by Mr. David Muirhead, is another proof that the old hands are as capable as ever of justifying the Club. Of the work by the new men a "Nude" (28), by Mr. Edward Wadsworth, and "Slag-Heap" (51), by the same artist, are the most interesting drawings; and Mr. Alvaro Guevara, Mr. Elliott Seabrooke, Mr. Frank C. Medworth, Mr. Wyndham Tryon and Mr. Maresco Pearce provide the best of the oil-paintings. Mr. Guevara is at his best and worst in the two paintings of acrobats, which are very striking in colour and arrangement, but he seems to be trying to assimilate the solid drawing of Degas with a quality of aerial lightness in colour derived from the arabesques of Matisse, and it is not surprising that the task should be too great for him, for Degas and Matisse are as different in outlook as two artists could be. The cramped arrangement of Mr. Gilbert Spencer's "The Shepherds Amazed" (100) seems to me quite meaningless; if Mr. Spencer is interested in the anecdote one can only say that he tells it inefficiently, and if, on the other hand, his problem is one of decorative arrangement, one can only deplore the poverty of its solution. More successful, because it at least expresses in a rhythmical way some intensity of movement, is "The Miraculous Draught of Fishes" (128), by Mr. T. S. Nash, for here the arrangement reinforces the literary content of the picture. There is a pleasant spacing of masses and harmonious colour in Mr. Elliott Seabrooke's "At Buckhurst Hill" (135), and Mr. Wyndham Tryon ingeniously suggests the idea in his "Landscape, Alicanté" (138), that Spanish mountains are naturally draped with brightly coloured cloths. Of Mr. Thomas Lowinsky's "The End of the World" (134) I can only say that he has found an appropriately depressing statement of a depressing subject.

There are one or two admirable paintings by Boudin at the Eldar Gallery, but the greater part of the exhibition consists of thumbnail sketches from his drawing books, and these are very well worth study, for Boudin was able to suggest in these drawings, by the simplest means, an extraordinary lightness and vitality of atmosphere. Their secret lies in the wonderful feeling he possessed for direction of lines of movement.

O. R. D.

THIRTY-TWO pages of coloured illustrations and the usual varied letterpress make "Winter's Pie" (6, Great New Street, E.C.4, 2s. net) as good a means of spending an idle hour as ever. We endorse the suggestion of the editors that it should be passed on to hospitals and Convalescent Homes by the grateful reader.

Music

MR. BYRD

ANOTHER of our pre-war activities has been resumed. The volumes of the English Madrigal edition, so faithfully prepared by Dr. Fellowes, have begun to reappear. Three new volumes—Nos. XIV., XV. and XVI.—have just been issued together, and in them we find, for the first time, the whole of the secular vocal music composed by the great William Byrd. Each volume reproduces one of the three collections published during his lifetime; that is to say, the Psalms, Sonnets and Songs (1588); the Songs of Sundrie Natures (1589); and the Psalms, Songs and Sonnets (not published till 1611, but containing probably all that he composed during the twenty years which separate this collection from its predecessors). A good deal of church music—chiefly settings of the Psalms—is included in these volumes, and this will presumably appear again in the edition of Byrd's church music on which the Carnegie Trust Committee is now engaged; but we are glad that Dr. Fellowes decided not to leave it out, for it certainly adds to the interest of the present volumes that each of them presents one of the Byrd collections in its original form, complete with dedication and title-page. The general method of scoring and reproduction is substantially the same as that adopted in earlier volumes of the series, the main point of difference being that some dynamic indications and suggestions as to pace have been added by the editor. In making them he has probably consulted the wish of his readers rather than himself, for he has a most exacting sense of editorial responsibility, and a special abhorrence of "editing" as it is too commonly understood.

Byrd's reputation as a madrigalist has been somewhat overshadowed by the glory of his church music, and there has been a tendency to dismiss his secular work as unimportant. The present issue should finally dispose of this view, against which the real Byrd-lovers have always protested. If Byrd had never written a note of sacred music, if the psalms and carols were deleted from the volumes before us, they would still remain an imperishable monument of English music. He was, in every sense, the father of the great school which flourished in the closing years of the century, and whose birth is usually said to date from the publication of "*Musica Transalpina*" in 1588. But Byrd's own "*Psalms, Sonnets and Songs*" had appeared earlier in the same year, and there can be no doubt that he had already formed his own ideas of what secular vocal music ought to be; moreover, his influence is far more apparent than that of any foreign model in the work of his successors, Morley, Weelkes, Wilbye, Gibbons, and their smaller contemporaries. All of these men, no doubt, were familiar with the compositions of Palestrina, Marenzio and the rest of them, but alike in technique and in outlook they follow their own tradition, just as the English church composers before them had always done.

To distinguish technical peculiarities is a simple matter; to define an outlook is much more difficult. We may, perhaps, put it this way. The Flemish and Italian composers of the sixteenth century had drawn a very hard-and-fast line between sacred and secular music. The motet was grave, the madrigal was gay—or if not gay, it must be gay's unmistakable opposite. Its emotional outlook was limited in range and naïf in character; it knew no intermediary between the sprightly and the pathetic; it must either twitter or languish. The best English madrigalists do neither of these things, and in none of them—except possibly Gibbons—is the refusal so uncompromising as it is in Byrd. His religion is more

than a creed, and he does not cease to be serious the minute he steps out of the shadow of the church. He can withe (if need be) the tangles of Neera's hair, but he does not propose to devote six days in the week to that pleasing but fruitless avocation. He is too much interested in other things besides Neera; his nature is profound and speculative, he would fain learn the meaning of good and evil, and the nature of man's existence—who we are, why we come, and whither we go. And he had—as people often had in those days—a clear perception of the true scope and function of art as an utterance of all that is deepest and most spiritual in man's nature. In church his music is as sincerely devotional as that of Palestrina himself, though it does not perhaps reveal quite the same ecstatic and perfect absorption of the individual in the act of worship. Outside, there is for him no essential difference; music is still an expression of the spirit, voicing all its hopes and fears, doubts and questionings, perplexities and aspirations. It is not a plaything, and those who look to the madrigal for no more than a pleasant after-dinner entertainment may well be disappointed in Byrd; but their disappointment is his great renown. The "*Songs of Sadnes and Pietie*" and the "*Songs of Sundrie Natures*" are the work of a sincere and passionate mind, subjective and yet impersonal, caring for the things of the spirit more than for the things of this world, and valuing itself only as a microcosm of humanity.

The technique is peculiarly characteristic of the man. From time immemorial the English composers had been in many respects a law unto themselves: they wrote in scales when other people wrote in modes; their melodies take outrageous leaps and plunges; they revel in dissonances of extreme harshness, and rhythms of the most elaborate complexity. And of them all Byrd is the most ruthless; so much so that he feels it necessary to assure his readers that some of the things they will find are not really misprints:

If thou delight in Musicke of great compasse, heere are diuers songs, which being originally made for Instruments to expresse the harmonie, and one voyce to pronounce the dittie, are now framed in all parts for voyces to sing the same. . . . In the expressing of these songs, either by Voyces or Instruments, if ther happen to be any jarr or dissona'ce, blame not the Printer, who (I doe assure thee) through his great paines and diligence doth heere deliver to thee a perfect and true Coppie. . . .

Small wonder that he should have felt the danger of being misunderstood, for some of his phrases are as tortured and writhen as anything in Donne—to whom, perhaps, more than to anyone else either in music or in literature, he may fitly be compared. There is no doubt of Byrd; he is not merely a great English composer, but one of the great composers of all time. For three centuries he has been neglected, but now, at long last, he is coming into his own, and it is to him before all others (save only Purcell) that the best English composers to-day are turning for guidance. They will not turn in vain.

R. O. M.

DICTIONARY OF MUSICAL COMPOSITIONS AND COMPOSERS. By W. E. Quarry. (Routledge. 5s. net.)—A painstaking but misguided attempt to provide an alphabetical catalogue of every important musical composition that bears a name. It is easy to point to omissions: on the one hand, for instance, we do not find "*When I am laid in Earth*" (Purcell); on the other hand, we do find "*Aux Flambeaux. Marche: March*" [*sic*] by Scotson Clark. Less excusable are the lapses in the biographical section, where (to take a few names at random) we can learn all we need to know about Henry Gadsby, F. W. Kucken, and Ann Sheppard Mounsey Bartholomew (née Mounsey), but search in vain for any mention of Morley, Orlando Lasso, Domenico Scarlatti, Balakireff, and John Field. Such omissions (which are probably not singular) do not incline us to put much trust in the volume as a work of reference.

EARLY ENGLISH MUSIC. By H. Orsmond Anderton. ("Musical Opinion" Office, 10s. 6d. net.)—The hopes aroused by the title of this book are not sustained by a perusal of it, for Mr. Anderton has given us neither history nor criticism. He has had access to a number of the manuscripts scored by members of the Tudor Music Committee, and is thus able to give some information about the earlier composers—e.g. Ludforde—which has not hitherto been available; but his researches (if one can dignify them by such a title) have been very incomplete, for other notable names—e.g. Cornyshe, Whytbroke, Persley, and among later composers Dering and Peter Phillips—are omitted altogether. Mr. Anderton's technical introduction is perfunctory and misleading; in his account of the modes he makes no mention of *musica ficta*, some knowledge of which is absolutely necessary for the most elementary understanding of the subject; and to say that "the Ionian and the Lydian with a B flat were felt to be the most satisfactory, and the others were altered to resemble them," is decidedly inadequate. The Ionian and the Lydian with a B flat are the same thing; the mode that was probably in most general use was the *Æolian*, which was constantly used in both its normal and its transposed forms (D with one flat, G with two flats), and is in fact the same as our melodic minor scale. The student of notation, as Mr. Anderton remarks, has numberless anomalies and confusions to deal with; but that is no reason why Mr. Anderton should make confusion worse confounded by saying that the sign for perfect time is the same as that for the minor prolation. In other respects the author is years behind the times; he still imagines, for instance, that "Dido and Æneas" was composed when Purcell was nineteen years of age (a theory exploded by Mr. Barclay Squire more than a dozen years ago), and he "anticipates with certainty" the publication of Gibbons' madrigals in the Fellowes edition—a volume that appeared in 1914.

As a critic, Mr. Anderton is usually content to fall back on the opinions of Dr. Walker and Dr. Fellowes, which appear frankly in the form of extracts, followed by some such comment as this: "This is justly and admirably put, and further words on my part are unnecessary." So are they, we think, on ours.

R. O. M.

Drama

A PAGE OF SECRET HISTORY

ST. JAMES'S THEATRE.—"Peter Pan."

WERE you, readers—were any of you?—at the first performance of "Peter Pan"? Strange as it appears to-day, success, tumultuous indeed when the green baize fell for the last time, was more than once in the course of the evening imperilled. Yet never did an audience assemble in braver spirits, for not a week had gone by since the laurelled mail-coaches carried through all England the news of Waterloo. Covent Garden was a bower of festive greenery set off with banners and emblems, and the moment the house detected on the wall of the beflagged O.P. stage-box the shadow of that nose under which the liberties of Europe now had leave to sleep in peace, a roar burst forth louder even than the one which a few moments later hailed the arrival of the Regent. It must be confessed that the Prince's crimson visage was, on this evening, a trifle overcast: he had overheard in the vestibule (louder than the strains of the loyal anthem) the sneering voice of his false friend Brummell observing to a companion: "Strike me, Jerry, if one can hear the—fiddlers for the band round Prinny's hat!" So cruel was this cut that, before leaving the theatre, the Prince insisted on exchanging hats with his first equerry, a young man known at Brooks's as the Beau's favourite pupil.

This incident was not the only one to mar the harmony of the occasion. When the Lost Boy in the play gave his name as "Slightly Soiled" a reference to the unhappy state of the Princess Caroline's reputation was scented, and angry cries were exchanged between the partisans of

the Prince and the partisans of the Prince's wife. Moreover Locke's celebrated "Peter Pan" music, played for the first and last time at this performance, brought with it some of the ill-luck which tradition ascribes to this composer's work. In the very first scene the novel Italian flying apparatus that was to have raised into the air Madame Squaligni, who was playing Peter (with songs: "The Stricken Usurper" and "Alas! my sad gazelle has sobbed in vain"), refused to perform its part. "Thanks to the insufficiency of the counter-weight," she tells us in her "Memoirs," "there stood the elfin child glued to earth. Picture the distracted feelings of a mother, you who have children of your own!" But these minor troubles were all forgotten (and triumph assured) when the splendid *tableau* "The Corsican Pirate Scuttled at Last" was revealed in the ship-scene amid a torrent of plaudits. This, we believe, was the original of the "Bellerophon *tableau*" in the modern acting-version of the play.

Is it generally known that Macready played James Hook? You have only to find the entry in his diary for November 31, 1840, to read:

Played Coriolanus, Hook and Petruchio in the after-piece, Hook in a way most actors might envy, but for me a poor performance. What a profession that imposes on a gentleman of breeding and education the style and rags of this coarse swash-buckler! At least I insisted that the oaths should be made such as I might use in my own family circle. Endeavoured to impress upon the prompter (who objected to the change) whether such habits must all too surely lead, but, I fear, with little success. Mortified to be told by my man that my voice no longer carries into the piazza, and took pains to warn the members of the company that I will not be shouted down on my own stage.

Charles Kean, on the other hand, reckoned Hook his favourite part—the word "crocodile" conflicting less than most with his chronic nasal catarrh. He introduced at the Princess's in 1854 a panorama (by Mr. Stanfield) of the voyage of the "Jolly Roger" from the Bahamas to the Bermudas, and in the scene where Wendy appears (as the song of the day put it) "crocheting comforters for cavalymen," visions of the Charge of the Light Brigade and the Trenches before Sebastopol were shown through a transparency. But what the author cherishes with peculiar pride (and you would see above the mantelpiece if he ever invited you to the little cottage in Thrums) is a crested letter kept in a frame of crimson plush bound with gold cord, and adorned by an oval medallion of Windsor Castle painted on china. We may but quote a fragment of this precious document:

... She is sure that Captain Hook thoroughly deserved his shocking fate, and is proud and happy to know that not one of England's gallant sailors could be guilty of such conduct towards an unprotected female. She believes that this play will do much to tranquillize the lower orders, and inspire sentiments of devotion to a Sovereign whose throne is in hourly danger from the base designs of the Puseyite faction.

And of course they still play "Peter Pan" in this twentieth century. We may regret that from the version now being given at the St. James's the lagoon scene, which contains the most romantic line in the play, is omitted, but we are much consoled by having in Miss Edna Best the most delicious Peter that has been seen—let us say, in order to stir no passionate partisanship, for a great number of years. She is, we may affirm, of the school of Pauline Chase, and if she cannot quite claim the fairylike glamour of every nice boy's sweetheart between 1906 and 1911, she makes up for it by being an indisputably real little boy. Her Peter has all the untroubled sexlessness of that age (which rather plays havoc with the author's fancy), and moves in just the tantalizing and rather terrible little circle of frozen aloofness which a true conception of the part requires. Miss Best is one of the few actresses who have perceived that Peter Pan is in no sense whatever a variant of a pantomime "boy." Miss Freda Godfrey fails to please

the enraged Wendy-ites (we gather from their clamour), but we think she exposes that brazen baggage rather neatly—giving us a realistic Wendy, not the grossly idealized (if adorable) Wendy of the Trevelyan tradition. Everyone dreams his own Hook as everyone his own Hamlet. Mr. Ainley's idea, we take it, is that the part calls for a romantic actor burlesquing himself; we think it requires a romantic actor taking himself with perfect seriousness. We will agree to differ.

D. L. M.

Correspondence

THE BRITISH COMMITTEE FOR AIDING MEN OF LETTERS AND SCIENCE IN RUSSIA

To the Editor of THE ATHENÆUM.

SIR,—We have recently been able to get some direct communication from men of science and men of letters in North Russia. Their condition is one of great privation and limitation. They share in the consequences of the almost complete economic exhaustion of Russia; like most people in that country they are ill-clad, underfed and short of such physical necessities as make life tolerable.

Nevertheless a certain amount of scientific research and some literary work still goes on. The Bolsheviks were at first regardless of, and even in some cases hostile to, these intellectual workers, but the Bolshevik Government has apparently come to realize something of the importance of scientific and literary work to the community, and the remnant—for deaths among them have been very numerous—the remnant of these people, the flower of the mental life of Russia, has now been gathered together into two special rationing organizations which ensure at least the bare necessities of life for them.

These organizations have their headquarters in two buildings known as the House of Science and the House of Literature and Art. Under the former we note such great names as those of Pavlov the physiologist and Nobel Prizeman, Karpinsky the geologist, Borodin the botanist, Belopolsky the astronomer, Tagantzev the criminologist, Oldenburg the Orientalist and permanent secretary of the Petrograd Academy of Science, Koni, Bechtereve, Latishev, Morozov, and many others familiar to the whole scientific world.

Several of these scientific men have been interviewed and affairs discussed with them, particularly as to whether anything could be done to help them. There were many matters in which it would be possible to assist them, but upon one in particular they laid stress. Their thought and work is greatly impeded by the fact that they have seen practically no European books or publications since the Revolution. This is an inconvenience amounting to real intellectual distress. In the hope that this condition may be relieved by an appeal to British scientific workers, Prof. Oldenburg formed a small committee and made a comprehensive list of books and publications needed by the intellectual community in Russia if it is to keep alive and abreast of the rest of the world.

It is of course necessary to be assured that any aid of this kind provided for literary and scientific men in Russia would reach its destination. The Bolshevik Government in Moscow, the Russian trade delegations in Reval and London, and our own authorities have therefore been consulted, and it would appear that there will be no obstacles to the transmission of this needed material to the House of Science and the House of Literature and Art. It can be got through by special facilities even under present conditions.

Many of the publications named in the Oldenburg list will have to be bought, the costs of transmission will be considerable, and accordingly the undersigned have formed themselves into a small committee for the collection and administration of a fund for the supply of scientific and literary publications, and possibly, if the amount subscribed permits of it, of other necessities, to these Russian savants and men of letters.

We hope to work in close association with the Royal Society and other leading learned societies in this matter. The British Science Guild has kindly granted the committee permission to use its address.

We appeal for subscriptions, and ask that cheques should be made out to the Treasurer, C. Hagberg Wright, LL.D., and sent to

The British Committee for aiding Men of Letters and Science in Russia,
British Science Guild Offices,
6, John Street, Adelphi, London, W.C.2.

Faithfully yours,

MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU.	BERNARD PARES.
ERNEST BARKER.	ARTHUR SCHUSTER.
E. P. CATHCART.	C. S. SHERRINGTON.
A. S. EDDINGTON.	A. E. SHIPLEY.
I. GOLLANCZ.	H. G. WELLS.
R. A. GREGORY.	A. SMITH WOODWARD.
P. CHALMERS MITCHELL.	C. HAGBERG WRIGHT.

A GERMAN-ENGLISH BOOK SCHEME

To the Editor of THE ATHENÆUM.

DEAR SIR,—You will perhaps be interested to hear that a scheme is being developed for the exchange of books between England and Germany.

The purpose of this scheme is to assist English people to obtain German books easily and as cheaply as possible, and to enable German individuals and organizations with limited funds to procure English books at favourable rates, thus helping them to break down the intellectual blockade caused through their inability to pay for English books owing to the depreciation in the purchasing value of the mark. For export the German Government has fixed the legal exchange rate of the mark at about 5d. a mark. English booksellers charge in excess of this rate in order to cover their risks. The scheme now being developed will supply German books to English readers at approximately 5d. for one mark. In Germany concessions have been made to enable certain books to be purchased at home trade price if the legal export price is credited in England for the purchase of English books.

The scheme will be worked on a system of credits on either side. Thus, a German paying 2 marks for a book will have a credit in England of 10d., and can get a 10d. English book for 2 marks. Without the possibility of being able to purchase at home trade prices through the concession for this scheme of exchange, such a book would cost him anything from 8 to 10 marks. People in England, on the other hand, will get their German books at approximately 5d. for 1 mark, plus postage (a lower rate would be illegal), which compares very favourably with the rates charged by the ordinary bookseller.

The World Association for Adult Education has agreed to act as agent for the scheme in England, and will work in co-operation with the editorial offices of "Minerva"—the Scholar's Universal Year-Book—published by the Association of Publishers of Books of Science in Berlin.

A large number of orders for English books are waiting to be placed by Germany.

All orders, as well as remittances for books received, should be sent to the World Association at 13, John Street, Adelphi, W.C.2.

Yours faithfully,

HORACE FLEMING,
DOROTHY W. JONES,
Joint Secretaries.

"A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BRITISH COMMON-WEALTH"

To the Editor of THE ATHENÆUM.

SIR,—In answer to Mr. Ramsay Muir's letter (ATHENÆUM, December 10), I may say that I read the whole of his illuminating book from cover to cover. I regret that one sentence in my review was not complete. It ought to have read: "We hope that the author in his second volume will furnish a better bibliography than that he now gives us at the end of each chapter."

YOUR REVIEWER.

The great bibliography of "American and English Genealogies in the Library of Congress" represents an astounding amount of work and enthusiasm. It is a tall volume of 1,336 pages, consisting of perfect, scientific bibliographical descriptions of 6,965 genealogical works, together with an equally thorough index of authors—a monumental work indeed.

Foreign Literature

LETTERS FROM PARIS

VI.—POE AND THE FRENCH MIND

THE readers of THE ATHENÆUM will forgive me if I return again to the subject of my last two Letters,* because my aim in so doing, as in these Letters generally, is to throw as many little bridges as possible—even if they should prove but fragile—between the French and the English point of view.

"Le poète moderne essaie de produire en nous un état, et de porter cet état exceptionnel au point d'une jouissance parfaite." Such was M. Valéry's definition. If one wanted to trace this conception back to its origin, one would have to revert to Novalis, than whom, on this point as on sundry others, there never was a man of genius more completely ahead of his age. "In eigentlichen Poemen ist keine als die Einheit des Gemüths," says one of the Fragments, and in his own country Novalis had to wait until the early nineties—until the first poems of Stefan Georg and the "Unterhaltung über Gedichte" of Hofmannsthal—for his meaning to be wholly assimilated and acted upon. Even then the group of the "Blätter für die Kunst" reached it rather through the circuit of the Symbolist Movement that at the fountain head. From the Parapomene to "Die Lehrlinge zu Sais" I cull these two lines:

Einem gelang es,—er hob den Schleier der Göttin zu Sais—
Aber was sah er? Er sah—Wunder des Wunders, sich selbst.

Can one avoid calling to mind the attention devoted by the circle of Mallarmé to the figure and myth of Narcissus?—Valéry's poem on Narcisse, the young André Gide's "Traité du Narcisse," and the opening chapter of Camille Mauclair's first book: "Eleusis." But—to borrow the two words which make up the title of Wilhelm Dilthey's profound work—Novalis valued the "Dichtung" essentially on account of the indwelling "Erlebnis," whereas the French poets reverse the accent and set rather the chief importance of the "Erlebnis" in the fact that it provides the only fit material for the "Dichtung." So that the case of Novalis belongs to a quite different spiritual universe, and would necessitate the introduction of another species of values; besides, we are happy enough to possess a curious example of the reaction towards Novalis of a mind of a very definitely French cast, with the additional peculiarity that it is the mind of a complete foreigner.

The reader may have noticed that among the forerunners of the movement towards "la poésie pure" the first name mentioned by M. Valéry—and the only foreign one—is the name of Edgar Poe. M. Valéry has here but faithfully acquitted himself of the duties of the historian: the name of Edgar Poe stands in that place by a right of its own, for both his work and his personality have operated as a germinating influence of the first order in the movement we are here studying. But precisely that they should have so operated is the fact that most of all invites consideration.

Now it so happens that one of the most characteristic among Poe's Marginalia—the one on Art—begins with a quotation from Novalis: "The artist belongs to his work, not the work to the artist." In a gesture very typical of the temper of his spirit—such as it is described by a school-fellow, Colonel J. T. C. Preston, "self-willed, capricious, inclined to be imperious"—Poe has torn the sentence from its illuminating context, which enables him to decree that the idea appears to him "that of an essentially prosaic intellect"—an epithet which, applied to the author of "Die Lehrlinge zu Sais," is almost inexhaustibly funny. In the original the sentence crowns a paragraph of far-reaching significance, not unlike those deep and lucid pools of reflection which adorn the narrative in Goethe's "Wahlverwandtschaften": the extracts from Ottilien's "Tagebuch." But—and here already appears a first trait, albeit still only an accessory one, of what I mean by Poe's French cast of mind—although, owing to incomplete data and rash jumping at conclusions, he misses the whole purport of the fragment of Novalis, the misconception itself—like the "mesure pour

rien" of a secure Kapellmeister or the preliminary canter of a crack—seems but to call into finer play all his mental resources, and the personal thought issues with an added relief:

In the hands of the true artist the theme, or "work," is but a mass of clay, of which anything (within the compass of the mass and quality of the clay) may be fashioned at will, or according to the skill of the workman. The clay is, in fact, the slave of the artist. It belongs to him. His genius, to be sure, is manifested, very distinctively, in the choice of the clay. It should be neither fine nor coarse, abstractly, but just so fine or so coarse, just so plastic or so rigid, as may best serve the purposes of the thing to be wrought, of the idea to be made out, or, more exactly, of the impression to be conveyed. There are artists, however, who fancy only the finest material, and who, consequently, produce only the finest ware. It is generally very transparent and excessively brittle.

And, not to retaliate upon Poe his own treatment of Novalis, let us quote to the end:

Were I called on to define, very briefly, the term "Art," I should call it "the reproduction of what the Senses perceive in Nature through the veil of the soul." The mere imitation, however accurate, of what is in Nature, entitles no man to the sacred name of "Artist." Denner was no artist. The grapes of Zeuxis were *inartistic*—unless in a bird's-eye view; and not even the curtain of Parrhasius could conceal his deficiency in point of genius. I have mentioned "the veil of the soul." Something of the kind appears indispensable in Art. We can, at any time, double the true beauty of an actual landscape by half closing our eyes as we look at it. The naked Senses sometimes see too little—but then *always* they see too much.

I have chosen on purpose a text that does not belong to one of the professedly theoretical writings so as to get nearer to the normal functioning of Poe's mind; not that I refuse to consider the theoretical writings as in the main sincere, but it is a sincerity with a flourish: the horse prances to such a degree that it prevents one from judging his true action. Yet even in this text how the individuality stands out, with its sharply defined outline, in its rigid attitude! The text is replete with instruction, both in what it states, and in what it unconsciously betrays.

I should not enter at all into the subject of Poe's poetry, and would never presume to trespass on ground not safely to be trodden by any but purely English or American critics, were it not that the question is so closely interlocked with what Poe's case may have to teach us as to certain differences between the French and the English point of view that it does not admit of complete disentanglement. "Very transparent and excessively brittle": the mind can hardly forbear to visualize the antagonistic uses which a determined opponent and the most thoroughgoing admirer could make of the words if affixed to the poems of Poe himself, the first arguing from the substance and the second arguing from the sound, and each, from his standpoint, would no doubt be right. The two extreme views, as held by "color che sanno," are well represented by Emerson's reference to Poe (in conversation with Mr. Howells) as "the jingle man,"—and the remark which Tennyson once dropped in talk, "not unworthy to stand beside Catullus, the most melodious of the Latins, and Heine, the most tuneful of the Germans." In between those two verdicts, yet, in a sense, including them also, all the shades of the truth have been elucidated—from the piercing analysis of Mr. W. C. Brownell in his "American Prose Masters," through the admirable introduction of E. C. Stedman to the Poems in the tenth volume of the definitive edition which he and Mr. Woodberry gave of the Works, down to the article that Mr. Edmund Gosse wrote in 1909, for the centenary of Poe's birth, on his poetry, partly to counterbalance the possibility of too great a stress being laid upon the tales, of which he esteems the importance "very slight by the side of that of the best poems." The article is reprinted in "Some Diversions of a Man of Letters." It is by far the best plea that I know in favour of Poe's poetry, because, very completely and subtly appreciative, it is yet redolent all through with the discriminating temperateness customary to its author. I, for my part, have only arrived quite recently at a genuine appreciation of Poe's poetry, and if I put such a personal fact on record, it is because I believe that the reasons which in my case deferred appreciation are the very same that have operated to establish the hold of Poe's work on most of my compatriots. When a Frenchman who has English blood

* Letters IV. and V. appeared in THE ATHENÆUM of July 23 and 30, 1920.

first comes into contact with English poetry, the impression is so overwhelming that he may remain absorbed, perhaps for years, in an exclusive pondering over the great, the central masters; he is like a visitor at Windsor Park who could never decide to forsake the Long Walk for any exploration of the bypaths, conscious though he remains all the time of what they too may hold in reserve.

My appreciation was deferred by the very degree of my allegiance to far greater masters in Poe's own line of sound—and by greater I simply mean here conveying the sense both of a richer and of a more inevitable music—by my allegiance to Keats, to Shelley and to Coleridge—to Rossetti and to Swinburne. "Exquisite mellifluousness of versification," to use one of Mr. Gosse's expressions, where was it to be found more supreme than in "the wandering airs" that "faint" of Shelley's "Indian Serenade"? They, for the time, barred the way to Poe's stanzas "To One in Paradise," in which Mr. Stedman rightly points out the capture of the authentic Shelleyan spell. Who knows but that a too intent gazing on the Psyche of Keats's Ode would have prevented me from opening my eyes to the Psyche of "Ulalume" and of the almost perfect "Lines to Helen"—those perhaps in all Poe's work that inscribe themselves the nearest to the central walk of English poetry? I should in all probability have felt a much greater consideration for the hackneyed *tour de force* of "The Raven" had I then known what Rossetti confided to Mr. Hall Caine, that it was his admiration for the "Raven" that wrought up the young man of nineteen to the writing of "The Blessed Damozel"; but at that time "The Blessed Damozel" herself and the "Willow Wood"—and the still greater magic of the "Ancient Mariner" and "Kubla Khan"—were, in the very realms of strangeness, mystery and symbolic allusion, in which Poe aspired to rule, far too intoxicating to allow of any diversion.

Richness and inevitability—richness in what a French critic might call "l'étoffe première" of the poet, and richness in the springs of inspiration, which always seem rather to rush to him than he to resort to them, and which lie withal so deep below that one never, as too often with Poe, comes to disagreeably close quarters with them;—inevitability in the flow of the inspiration, so ample, yet all the while so serenely unconcerned (an appearance of course, but the impression is conveyed, and the whole question turns upon that), and inevitability in the indestructible stamp of the result: such are—crowned by a general sense of sovereign ease in all the movements of the poet, that always seem effected as by one who has all space at his disposal—the two characters which immediately strike a Frenchman who has English blood when he turns from French to English poetry. He is like a man who on a June afternoon would be looking at a beautiful landscape behind the glass of a window: he has not noticed that the window is shut: the landscape is beautiful indeed, yet there is something missing in his personal well-being. Somebody opens the window: the sunshine and the breeze come in and intermingle liberally, and of a sudden it is to him as if he had never known before what it was to breathe quite freely.

Now these sensations are precisely those which the pure Frenchman is least likely to undergo. The inevitability of a poem is not to be felt if the process of reading, the mere understanding of the sense of the words (without alluding to their subtler implications in the language of each great poet) retains in it too much of laboriousness: either the inevitability is missed altogether, or, if the reader be a very scrupulous one, he may after many readings come to reconstruct it; but what he then reconstructs is an artificial inevitability stripped from the very fluency that graces the original, and that needs to be apprehended at once; and unless he is very careful, not only to draw distinctions, but, once they are drawn, to bear them well in mind, he may run the risk of putting to the account of the inevitability of the poem were it but so little of that character of an achievement which his own reconstruction presents. On the other hand, severed from that stamp of inevitability which is the one justification and certain test of the greatness of a poem, the richness, both in "l'étoffe première" and in the springs of inspiration, appears to him—and quite rightly—from a very different angle. One can imagine a great poet of the best French tradition in presence of these innumerable and various elements, which to his eye will appear as lying on the ground,

neglected and almost squandered, and picturing to himself vividly all the while to what deft use his thinner, more tenuous inspiration would put each of them: he is like a dexterous jeweller before a lump of sparkling stones, every one of which appears for the first time on the market; yet nobody seems to have noticed how new, how original, how unexploited they are, since nobody has taken the trouble to devise for each of them a special, carefully isolated setting. Put such a Frenchman in contact with Poe's poems and theoretical writings, and he will declare: "Here at last is a man who is clear as to what he is about, and who minds his business: he has the new themes, and he knows what to make of them; from him even a French poet may have something to learn." When he reads in the "Philosophy of Composition" such sentences as: "My first object (as usual) was originality" and "The fact is that originality (unless in minds of very unusual force) is by no means a matter, as some suppose, of impulse or intuition. In general, to be found, it must be elaborately sought, and, although a positive merit of the highest class, demands in its attainment less of invention than negation," the French poet is bound to react, and the necessity of his reaction carries us straight to the centre of our subject.

CHARLES DU BOS.

(To be continued.)

CAPITAINES COURAGEUX. Par Rudyard Kipling. Traduction de Louis Fabulet et Charles Fountaine-Walker. (Paris, Mercure de France. 7fr.)—One is always glad to see a good English book translated into French, and "Captains Courageous" is a very fine book indeed. It makes the fourteenth volume of translations of Mr. Kipling published by the Mercure de France, though we believe this is not the first French translation of it that has appeared. Mr. Kipling is fortunate in having an admirer in France of the devotion of M. André Chevrillon, who has just joined the Immortals—not in Heaven, but on the benches of the Academy—and who sings his praises tirelessly.

We have examined this translation with some care, and have come to the conclusion that MM. Fabulet and Fountaine-Walker are heartily to be congratulated on their skill in rendering both the spirit of the book and its nautical technicalities. We note, however, that "a long, gray, mother-wave" becomes "une grosse vague mélancolique et grise." Again, whatever be the French for "fore-an'-after," it is surely not "bachot," which means a punt.

The Week's Books

Asterisks are used to indicate those books which are considered to be most interesting to the general reader.

PHILOSOPHY.

Stewart (C. R.). The Law of Love, as Expounded in a Narrative of Life and Activities on "the Other Side." 7½x5. 160 pp. Kegan Paul, 4/6 n.

Trismosin (Solomon). Splendor Solis: Alchemical Treatises of Solomon Trismosin, Adept and Teacher of Paracelsus, 22 Allegorical Pictures reproduced from Original Paintings. Explanatory Notes by J. K. 10x7½. 104 pp. Kegan Paul, 21/ n.

RELIGION.

Mackinlay (Lieut.-Col. G.). Recent Discoveries in St. Luke's Writings. 8½x5½. 282 pp. tables. Marshall Bros., 12/6 n.

Weir (T. H.). The Variants in the Gospel Reports (Alexander Robertson Lectures for 1917). 7½x5. 150 pp. Paisley, Alex. Gardner, 6/ n.

SOCIOLOGY AND POLITICS.

Macara (Sir Charles W.). In Search of a Peaceful World: the Practical Views of a Leader of Industry. 7½x5½. 318 pp. Manchester, Sherratt & Hughes, 6/ n.

People's Year-Book, 1921. Annual of the English and Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Societies. 8½x5½. 400 pp. Manchester, Co-operative Wholesale Society, 1, Balloon Street, 2/ n.

Rothfeld (Otto). Impressions of the Co-operative Movement in France and Italy. 9½x7½. 87 pp. Bombay, Govt. Central Press, 1rup. 8an.

- Slonim (Marc). *Le Bolchévisme vu par un Russe*. 6½x5. 208 pp. Paris, Bossard, 7fr. 50.
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